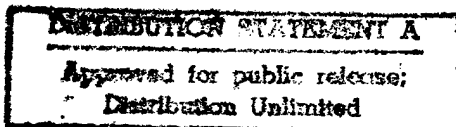


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10 November 1987



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Near East & South Asia

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U.S., European Persian Gulf Fleet Duties Defined
46200003 Munich SUEDEDEUTSCHE ZEITUNG
In German 6 Oct 87 p 6

[Article by Siegfried Thielbeer: "The Commitment of the Europeans in the Gulf"]

[Text] Frankfurt—The United States has repeatedly asked its allies in recent weeks to assume for their part a portion of the burden even "outside the NATO area." The British Royal Navy is represented in the Gulf with three convoy ships, usually with two frigates and a destroyer especially designed for air defense, as well as a supply ship. At present the frigate "Andromeda" is safeguarding the minesweeping actions of the four British minehunters off the coast of the United Arab Emirates, the guided-missile destroyer "Edinburg" is accompanying ships under the British flag from the Straits of Hormuz up to off the coast of Bahrain, the frigate "Brazen" is docked in Mauritius. Here, to maintain three "escorts" continuously signifies even for a great navy such as the British one a considerable show of strength. In the London defense ministry, it is pointed out that in order to maintain three ships in the Gulf, it is necessary to make available six ships; the three other ones are in each case on the way or being prepared for their mission. The British are relying on their traditional contacts with Oman and the United Arab Emirates. Here there are discreet porting rights; the forces there are trained and led by British military personnel who are officially on leave. The airfields are occasionally used by British sea reconnaissance "Nimrod" aircraft. In maneuvers, the rapid redeployment movement of air forces and paratroop units—the British also have a "Rapid Strike Force" stationed in England—has been repeatedly tested out. It is above all their considerations for their client states that have induced the British to exercise great restraint in connection with a too demonstrative cooperation with the Americans. France as well has by now dispatched a large portion of its fleet to the Indian Ocean. The French warships that are already operating in the Gulf region under the command of Rear Admiral Lanxade—the command and supply ship "Marene" and by now five instead of the usual two to three Avisos (frigates about 2,200 tons in size, armed with "Exocet" missiles, such as the "Victor Schoelcher")—are now able to hasten to the aid of attacked ships. In addition, the two modern antisubmarine frigates "Georges Sleygues" and "La Motte-Picquet" have been sent into the Gulf region. These ships, 4,000 tons in size, armed with four "Exocet" rockets, a 10-centimeter rapid-fire gun, the "Crotale" rocket system for air defense, and two "Lynx" helicopters for antisubmarine action, correspond in their fighting power largely to the modern German "Bremen" frigates.

Unofficial Division of Operations and Consultation

The French task force from Toulon, which now operates between Djibouti, the French base, and the Straits of Hormuz, consists of the aircraft carrier "Clemenceau,"

the two guided-weapon destroyers "Duquesne" and "Suffren" equipped with "Maurica" air defense rockets (range about 40 kilometers), and the supply ship "Meuse." The aircraft carrier, which displaces almost 33,000 tons, can deploy 20 Super Etendard aircraft, which can fire "Exocet" rockets, as well as fighter aircraft of the (American) type "Crusader," antisubmarine aircraft, and helicopters. For countering the mines that have turned up in the Gulf of Oman also since August, France has brought in three minehunters and a supply ship, the "Garonne." In order to be able to keep up its substantial presence, in addition the supply ship "Var" and the repair ship "Jules Verne" are in deployment. France traditionally and pointedly is cultivating its independence vis-a-vis the United States. Nevertheless there are worked-out methods of local cooperation of the sea forces.

Following the attack on an Italian commercial ship, Italy has dispatched a task force of three of its most modern minesweepers, three frigates, and two support ships, including a submarine salvage ship that above all is likely to be used by mine clearance divers. The Italian navy, which has cultivated in the Mediterranean always a close cooperation with the French fleet, will relay logistically on the French fleet and its base at Djibouti and will operate in the same area, that is, outside the Straits of Hormuz.

The Dutch and Belgians have been annoyed at Italy's going it alone, since at first they had preferred the formation of a multilateral task force. The four minehunters of the Tripartite class, jointly developed with France, which the Dutch and Belgians now have sent together with a Belgian resupply ship and under the command of a Belgian—they will arrive at the Gulf area in the second half of October—are operating, as it is said at the Hague, "in the closest tactical and logical cooperation" with the British. All three navies have cultivated their cooperation for decades in the region of the English Channel.

Thus there is emerging an unofficial division of operations of the Europeans with the Americans: French and Italians are operating largely outside the Straits of Hormuz; the British are giving escorting and mine protection from Hormuz to Bahrain; the Americans are clearing mines above all in the north of the Persian Gulf up toward Kuwait, but they are safeguarding their convoys over the entire cruising range. Although officially each nation is escorting only ships sailing under their own flag, nevertheless by now also an indirect protection of the escorts is noticeable for other ships sailing in the vicinity. For some time now, many tanker captains have been waiting for the passage of convoys in order to tag along with them.

The Soviet navy routinely shows the flag in the Indian Ocean and in the Gulf, with a "Krivak" frigate and three minesweeping ships, which occasionally escort Soviet ships. Thus, at the beginning of the mining actions of

Iran, the Soviet Union was the only nation that had minesweeping capacities in the Gulf. Quite recently two of the modern destroyers of the "Sovremennyi" class have been added. The Soviet squadron in the Indian Ocean is relying on about seven supply ships and tankers. Considered as a "normal presence" are the presence of an amphibious landing ship in the Red Sea and the deployments of two naval reconnaissance aircraft from out of Aden. Also the Soviet warships are escorting, although little is spoken about this, commercial ships up to Kuwait. Moscow has repeatedly proposed a cooperative effort with the other navies, such as the formation of a multinational flotilla under the U.N. flag, but without being welcomed with open arms among the Western sea powers. Nevertheless, a tacit understanding is not being ruled out by experts.

The contribution of the Federal German Navy has consisted so far in sending as a replacement for the supply ship of the Belgians a German ship into the English Channel. To build up this customary mutual helping out among the allies for years as a "compensation" for the activities of its partners in the Gulf is felt to be "embarrassing" by experts.

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EGYPT

Ambassador Describes Current Soviet Reforms
45040001a Cairo AL-WAFD in Arabic 1 Oct 87 p 6

[Interview with Ambassador to the Soviet Union Salah Basyuni by Sa'd Zaghul Fu'ad: "The Soviet Union is Now Going Through a Revolution of Reform in the Economy and System of Government"]

[Text] Salah Basyuni is the architect of Egyptian-Soviet relations. Three years ago President Husni Mubarak assigned him specially to initiate the resumption of relations between Cairo and Moscow (which had been severed when relations between the two countries deteriorated during the late president Anwar al-Sadat's regime) and chose him as Egypt's ambassador to Moscow. There he was able to overcome the difficulties and blemishes that were there, which the years of the deterioration in relations had imparted, and he succeeded in melting the ice that had frozen relations between the two countries, which today have returned to their normal channels.

Salah Basyuni is the dean of Arab ambassadors in Moscow. Egypt was the first Arab country to exchange diplomatic representation with Moscow and recognize the legitimacy of the existing regime in the Soviet Union, in the era of the Wafd cabinet in 1942. Outside diplomatic activity, Basyuni is a great sportsman and won the rowing championship when he was a student in the Faculty of Law. He was the person who spotted the car with which the criminals tried to blow up the home of the people's leader, Mustafa al-Nahhas, the one who

pointed its number out to the investigators and proved that it was a government vehicle. In addition, his father was the judge Hasan Fahmi Basyuni, who was renowned for his reduced sentences for nationalists and was the one who passed a sentence in the case of the 6 May bombs and made a statement to the press in which he said, "If I had been able to render a verdict of innocent, I would have done so." In this case, when the king tried to intervene, he threatened to withdraw from the review of the case and declared the reasons for the withdrawal.

I sat down with Salah Basyuni in his office in the embassy in Moscow and held a conversation with him on the innovations Gorbachev has brought forth, the Kremlin's position on the Iraqi-Iranian war, the great powers' intensified military position in the Gulf and the Egyptian position on the two parties to the war. And, since Basyuni was one of those who had participated in the preparatory activities of the birth of the Organization of African Unity, the conversation dealt with Arab-African relations and the background to the freeze in these relations. He spoke about all these and other issues for AL-WAFD's readers.

The interview began and I said:

[Question] In your capacity since the 1960's as one of the most prominent of Egyptian diplomats and experts in Soviet and African affairs, since you are the architect of Egyptian-Soviet relations, to which President Mubarak appointed you specially with the initiation of the resumption of normal relations between Moscow and Cairo, now that you have spent 3 years in Moscow, what innovations has Gorbachev brought to the Soviet people?

[Answer] The Soviet Union in Gorbachev's era is indeed going through a reform revolution, as Gorbachev himself has described it. This reform revolution is founded on rebuilding the economic and social structure in the Soviet Union and fundamentally remedying the rigidity that has afflicted the Soviet Union over the past 70 years.

What's New About Gorbachev's Policy

I interrupted him by asking:

[Question] Rebuilding anew?

He replied, the words flowing from his mouth:

[Answer] If we go back to the economic decrees and laws that the central committee agreed to last June (1987), which the Supreme Soviet Council approved, these decrees and laws are certainly a revolutionary change in the economic and social structure of the Soviet Union, in the sense that there are modern new systems for administering the Soviet public sector, and there also are new systems for administering agriculture, whether the farms are cooperative or governmental. In general, the issue of rebuilding in the Soviet Union is the issue of the day.

and one can say that one of the most important rules Gorbachev has set out for the success of this policy is what we can also call an important political development in the Soviet Union.

[Question] The media opening to the West?

[Answer] No, the media liberalization internally, in the sense of the possibility of criticizing the party, the ministers, the management of the public sector, and officials in the government. These are things that have not happened before. Today these are ordinary things in the Soviet media agencies. On the other hand, the issue of democracy within the party and also outside the party is considered one of the basic rules that support the policy of the rebuilding activities, because from Gorbachev's standpoint it is not at all possible that there be a restructuring in the management of the Soviet economy if that is not accompanied by a media liberalization and participation by the people with the party in the processes of this reform, or for there not to be democracy. The two elements must go together with the economic changes, which this radical change has the goal of achieving.

Today the Soviet Union is passing through a transitional stage, which Gorbachev set at a period of 3 years. Gorbachev declared that as of the 13th 5-year plan, these laws will be executed in full, and he stressed that there is absolutely no retreat. I believe that a very great opportunity for success lies before this new policy of Gorbachev's because there is a general feeling that the time has come for the Soviet Union to move in a direction that will allow a real development in the economy and a rise in the Soviet people's standard of living.

I would like also to add in this regard that this policy cannot be granted the elements of success, in the sense that the necessary economic ingredients for the success of this policy will be present, unless it is connected to a foreign policy with which it is compatible. Hence the Soviet Union's appeal for nuclear disarmament and the reduction in nuclear and traditional armament, so that this will lead to a reduction in military spending, which is totally linked to the process of economic transformation and development in the Soviet Union. That is, Soviet foreign policy does not arise from a vacuum, and I do not believe that it is a policy of slogans; rather it is a policy that is founded on political-economic reality.

Relations Between the People and the Leadership

[Question] What about the relationship today between the presidency and the people in the Soviet Union? Is there anything new?

[Answer] When we follow the history of Soviet leaders we find that there has been no Soviet Communist Party secretary who has actually gone down to the streets and spoken directly to the people by means of field visits or the media, especially television, aside from Gorbachev.

That is, the only figure who had direct contact with the people at the beginning of the revolution was Lenin and, since Lenin, this form of popular political leadership has appeared in the Soviet Union only in the person of Gorbachev.

The Soviets and the Gulf War

I moved the conversation over to the Arabs' hot issue, the Gulf war, which is entering its eighth year, and said:

[Question] What about the Soviet Union's position vis-a-vis the Gulf war, as the Kremlin sees it?

He said, as if he were giving a lecture at the Institute of Diplomacy in Cairo:

[Answer] The Soviet Union feels that the Arab Gulf region falls directly within the scope of its national security, through the Soviet Union's status as a neighbor of Iran's and the proximity of the Gulf region to it. As far as this war goes, the Soviet Union's policy always has been to call for a stop to it, as a war behind which absolutely no benefit lay. Rather, basically, the Soviet Union, in its treatment of this war, through its connection by the treaty of friendship and cooperation to Iraq, has committed itself totally to this treaty and stood in support of Iraq in defense of its territory against the Iranian aggression. I believe that this Soviet position is clear to Iran and that the Soviet Union will in no way permit Iran to invade Iraq. On the other hand, the Soviet Union is making efforts today through political mediation in a serious attempt to end this war, and it took part in creating the recent Security Council resolution regarding the cessation of this war; it played a great role in this respect. In addition, the Soviet Union now is almost the second great power that has a direct contact with Iran and is working to compel Iran to accept the Security Council resolution and cooperate with the secretary general of the United Nations. However, the problem that exists now in the Gulf may be attributed basically to Iran's position. Iran has not accepted or rejected the Security Council resolution. In this manner, it is maneuvering on this resolution and does not want to commit itself to it. On the other hand, the Iranian position in itself has led to the American, British, and French presence we see today in the Gulf, that is, this Iranian position has led to the polarization of these powers in the Gulf region and there would not have been anything calling for that had there been an intelligent Iranian policy accepting the termination of this war. In general, I can say that the Soviet Union is committed to everything the treaty of friendship and cooperation with Iraq imposes and, at the same time, is working by political means to end this tense situation in the Gulf by stopping this war. The Soviet Union is against the American, British, and French war presence in the Gulf and considers this presence a direct threat to its national security, but at the same time this concentrated Western military presence in the Gulf could, if it is eliminated and ended, lead, in the Soviet view, to the creation of

progress in the direction of the execution of the Security Council resolution halting the Iraq-Iranian war and guaranteeing the freedom of shipping in the Gulf.

I would like to say that the Soviet Union has an interest in the freedom of shipping in the Gulf. The Soviet Union committed itself to an agreement with Kuwait to fly the Soviet flag on three of Kuwait's oil tankers. It started to carry out this commitment and put a limited naval force in the waters of the Gulf. However, the United States of America then took the initiative of getting in contact with Kuwait, flew the American flag on more than 15 Kuwaiti oil tankers, and tied that to placement of a massive military force in the Gulf. The Soviet Union is announcing today that it is ready to bring its limited military force out of the Gulf in exchange for the departure of all foreign naval forces from the Gulf.

[Question] What about Egypt's position here?

[Answer] Egypt is striving earnestly to work to stop this war, and at the same time it is supporting and backing Iraq in its defense of the Eastern sector of the Arab nation. Iraq is the eastern gate of the Arab nation and is defending it heroically, and Egypt will not allow Iran to break through this gate. Iran is aware of the truth and the dimensions of the Egyptian position, which Egypt has been anxious to convey clearly to Tehran. Iraq today has become a large defensive wall against the Iranian invasion of the Arab countries.

[Question] You have constant contacts with the Soviet leadership. What about the true nature of the Soviet position on the Middle East crisis?

[Answer] The Soviet Union's position is clear on the necessary means for resolving the Arab-Israeli struggle. In this regard I can point to Gorbachev's speech when the Syrian president, Hafez al-Assad, was on his latest visit to the Soviet Union, when he clearly and frankly stated that war has lost its credibility as a means of resolving the Arab-Israeli struggle and, consequently, the Soviet Union considers that the only resolution can be through the convening of an effective international conference comprising all the parties concerned, the Palestine Liberation Organization and the five permanent members of the international Security Council. To this end, the Soviet Union is making constant contacts with all parties, including Israel and the Palestine Liberation Organization, and there no longer is a difference between the Soviet Union and any Arab position on the means for resolving the Arab-Israeli struggle. There are obstacles to the convening of the international conference from Israel's standpoint and the real or apparent struggle that is going on there between Perez and Shamir on the international conference. However, ultimately Israel is opposed to the convening of the international conference in the desired form, which will lead to a comprehensive,

just peaceful resolution of the Palestinian cause, guaranteeing the Palestinian people's legitimate national rights and liberating Arab territories from the Israeli occupation.

Here I must point out that the Soviet Union has a positive, serious position on the resolution of the Middle East crisis and the resolution of the Arab-Israeli struggle, whose essence is the Palestinian cause, and this will of necessity lead to the resolution of the crisis of Lebanon.

[Question] What about Soviet-Israeli relations today? Are there attempts to restore diplomatic relations between them?

[Answer] The restoration of diplomatic relations between the Soviet Union and Israel is a matter that has been raised. Israel considers that before the convening of any international conference, diplomatic relations must be restored between the Soviet Union and Israel, and the Soviet Union for its part considers that Israel must accept the convening of the international conference and start the true peace process, at which point it will be possible to consider the subject of the restoration of relations.

[Question] What about what was previously broadcast about the visit of a Soviet consular delegation to Israel, stating that this visit would go on a number of months? Is this Soviet flirtation with Israel a prelude to the restoration of diplomatic relations between them, as some newspapers of the West say, or is it just a temporary consular working visit?

[Answer] Indeed, according to what we see, the Soviet delegation in this visit to Israel is a limited consular mission for purely consular tasks, and there are no political officials heading it, since it is carrying out consular activity to discuss the conditions of Soviet subjects in Israel and discuss the conditions of the properties of the Russian church there, whose value amounts to millions of dollars. In addition, Israel, at a time in which the Soviet consular mission is engaging in its tasks in Israel, has requested that in exchange it send an Israeli consular mission to Moscow.

Egypt and the Soviets

[Question] Let us move on to another point. What about Arab-Soviet relations?

Basyuni said, signs of relaxation sweeping his features:

[Answer] I believe that the Soviet Union has its position and status in the Arab world. From the political standpoint, the Soviet Union assumes a stand in principle of support of Arab rights and, consequently, there is no Arab stand in opposition to the Soviet Union. Therefore, the Soviet Union occupies a distinctive position in the Arab world, and the Soviet Union has developed bilateral relations with all the countries of the Arab world.

[Question] Where have Soviet-Egyptian relations gone?

[Answer] I can say today that there no longer are problems between the Soviet Union and Egypt and that the stage when relations between Moscow and Cairo had deteriorated has ended totally. President Mubarak's policy is committed to friendly dealings with the Soviet Union, divorced from the blemishes of the past, and Egypt will not forget the Soviet Union for the role it played, with respect to the arming of the Egyptian army or with respect to the industrialization of Egypt, from the construction of the High Dam to the numerous major industries that constitute the public sector, the basis and foundation of Egypt's productive economy. There is a major line in President Mubarak's international policy. A total separation exists between Egypt's relations with the Soviet Union and its relations with the United States of America. Egypt will not allow one relationship to harm the other, and it proceeds in its relations with the two great powers in a balanced manner.

Arab-African Relations

I moved the interview over to Arab-African relations, of which Baryuni is one of the architects of the past. I said:

[Question] As one of the participants in the activities of preparing for the birth of the Organization of African Unity, how do you feel about this organization today?

[Answer] Egypt is an Arab African country and Egypt's policy, since the revolution, has been proceeding on two parallel lines vis-a-vis the Arab nation and the African continent. The Egypt of 'Abd-al-Nasir committed itself to support of the Arab liberation movement as it committed itself to support of the Arab liberation movement. Before the establishment of the Organization of Arab Unity, all Arab liberation movements had their main offices in Cairo, and Egypt provided these movements with all the military and financial support it could. I can say that there was no African liberation movement that did not have an office in Cairo, and their leaders resided in Cairo and directed their movements' struggles from it. At that time a firm combative link took place between President 'Abd-al-Nasir and some African leaders such as Nkruma, Modibo Keita, Ben Bella, and so forth. This led to the establishment of a bond between the African leaders and 'Abd-al-Nasir in support of the African liberation revolutions. The African leaders and 'Abd-al-Nasir found that it was not in the interests of the African liberation movement to continue to keep the Casablanca and Brazzaville groups separate and, therefore, the idea of African unity arose. The Organization of African Unity was established in May 1963, the first African summit conference was held in Cairo in 1964, and the first chairman of the Organization of African Unity was the late President 'Abd-al-Nasir. Egypt continued support for the African liberation movements until every African country became independent, except for Namibia, which is still struggling for its national liberation,

and Egypt is working in the framework of the Organization of African Unity and outside this framework for the realization of its independence.

Egyptian policy today toward Africa is founded not just on support for its countries' independence but also on the deepening of the bonds of development cooperation with them. In Cairo there is a fund to support technical cooperation with the countries of Africa, and there are more than 1,000 Egyptian experts in various countries of Africa, engineers and doctors, working to build up these countries and receiving their wages from this fund, whose resources are allocated from the Egyptian budget and are in the Egyptian Foreign Ministry.

In addition, we can refer here to what was raised at the meetings of the latest African summit in Addis Ababa on the need for the restoration of Arab-African cooperation. It is most unfortunate that, since the first summit conference of Arab-African cooperation was held in Cairo in 1976 and a number of important resolutions were issued, such as the establishment of a fund to aid African countries, the establishment of the Arab-African Development Bank, whose headquarters are in Khartoum, and other important resolutions in the area of cooperation between Arab and African countries, most unfortunately, since the holding of this conference there has been no followup on the execution of these resolutions and the committee of Arab-African cooperation, which is composed of 24 Arab and African countries, has not met for years. This issue was the object of the attention of the recent African summit in Addis Ababa, and a resolution was issued on the need to stimulate this cooperation because this cooperation is not only in the economic field but also in the political field, especially since Africa is standing with determination on the side of Arab rights and the Palestinian cause and the Middle East crisis are among the permanent sections in the agenda of every meeting of the council of ministers and the summit of Africa. At every meeting a unanimous resolution is issued supporting Arab rights, that is, the right of the Palestinian people to self-determination and the establishment of their independent country on their national territory. Conversely, in exchange, there ought to be an Arab response, especially at the present time, when the majority of the African countries are suffering from severe crises and in some of them starvation and drought are destroying their people. Let me add that the Palestine Liberation Organization has an observer seat in the Organization of African Unity and Yasir 'Arafat attends all the meetings of the African summit.

[Question] What are the reasons for the suspension of Arab-African cooperation, as you see them?

[Answer] It is the Arab position that has frozen this cooperation, and the reasons for this freeze are attributable not to the African countries but to the Arab countries. If this cooperation had progressed, today there would have been an agreement between the Arab League and the Organization of African Unity, and economic

cooperation would have borne fruit in the development of the African countries. However, it is the deteriorating Arab situation that has led to the freeze in Arab-African cooperation. We hope that the Arab summit will meet and issue a resolution that is compatible with the Organization of African Unity resolution activating the Arab-African committee of 24.

[Question] Don't you think that the Africans are more harmonious and serious than the Arabs?

[Answer] One can say that the Organization of African Unity, which contains 51 countries, has not failed to hold one meeting since its establishment, except for what happened at the Tripoli summit, where, due to special circumstances, the legal quorum was not met. This was the only case in which the African summit did not meet. All the African summit meetings met in full on schedule, and no one happened to be absent from them. The same with the meetings of the council of ministers of the Organization of African Unity: its resolutions are always the object of respect and seriousness of execution. This picture differs totally from that of the Arab League. Here I would like to suggest that, whatever disputes there might be among some African countries, that has never prevented the holding of the conferences of the African summit and the council of ministers of the Organization of African Unity, and all African disputes are resolved at the African summit meetings. Most unfortunately, we find the conditions of the Arab League and the difficulty of holding the Arab summit the opposite of this. The Africans are more serious in dealing with their affairs than we Arabs.

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Banking Chief Discusses Islamic Financial System
45040305 London AL-HAWADITH in Arabic
28 Aug 87 pp 43-44

[Interview with Dr Ahmad al-Najjar, Secretary General of International Federation of Islamic Banks, by Amir al-Zuhar: "The Banks Are Innocent of the Charge of Financing Fundamentalists"]

[Text] The announcement which Dr al-Najjar, secretary general of the International Federation of Islamic Banks, made in Cairo — that he would request the removal of the Egyptian Naair Social Bank from membership in the federation, at the member states' next meeting in Islamabad at the end of October 1987 — was a great surprise. In the accounts agency's official reports, it was established that the bank had deposited money with other banks for interest in advance, which is in violation of the law which applies to the bank's establishment and the federation's statutes, which are derived from Islamic legislation.

This surprise triggered a set of questions concerning the experiment of the Islamic banks which AL-HAWADITH brought to Dr al-Najjar himself.

AL-HAWADITH: What does the removal of the bank from membership in the federation mean?

Dr al-Najjar: It means that it is an assertion by the federation that this bank does not apply the essence of Islamic legislation on whose basis it was founded and in accordance with which it was admitted to membership in the federation. Since the experiment of the Islamic banks in general still is a relatively new one in modern economics, one must not deal leniently with such fundamental violations, especially since the banks are facing baseless charges from outside and serious difficulties from within. The federation must be concerned with the sound application of the essence of Islamic legislation through these banks, so that they will be able to continue to perform their distinctive role in the Islamic countries' modern economies and so that these wrongful practices will not spread to other banks.

AL-HAWADITH: Charges are being directed at some Islamic banks to the effect that they are financing extremist groups in their countries.

Dr al-Najjar: These charges are unfair and they are being circulated by the enemies of the experiment and people who do not accept the principle which holds that the Islamic economy can solve the problems of modern society in a distinctive manner without such negative features as the rise in prices and inflation or the spread of carelessness consumer behavior among the members of society.

AL-HAWADITH: Let us go back to the beginning. What does an "Islamic bank" mean? What sets it apart from a traditional bank?

Dr al-Najjar: Some people have a misconception, which is that the Islamic banks are ordinary ones themselves, except that there is no interest given on deposits or collected on loans. This misconception adds to the obscurity that prevents understanding of the true nature of the role of the Islamic banks in society.

The matter simply is that while the traditional banks generally handle money by considering it a commodity in itself paying attention in particular to individuals who have financial surpluses only and while these banks are busy monitoring the money markets domestically and abroad with a single goal, which is to realize profit, the Islamic banks realize their profits by handling money with the view that the realization of profit arises basically after the cash performs its function. This may result in a profit or loss and a change in the behavior of the individual which might prompt him to save and to organize his spending in a manner that will cause his consumption to be moderate and in a manner that will benefit his society through the investment of his income

or salary, no matter how small or limited that is, by becoming accustomed to making deposits in banks and withdrawing on the basis of need alone.

Therefore, the attention of the Islamic banks is focused basically on using the function and the performance of money as a means for benefiting individuals and employing them in a manner which will develop their abilities and cause their resources to grow as a result of the use of these abilities. This will necessarily lead to attention to the people who perform the function, basically, and not to money as a commodity in itself. It is very possible for any individual to deposit money which he might have acquired without effort, then live in a lazy, negative manner, just as a consumer in society, in exchange for the prior agreement from the bank to pay assured, fixed profits.

AL-HAWADITH: Who then are the clients of the Islamic bank?

Dr al-Najjar: Based on this clear view and function of the Islamic bank, its clients, basically, represent all the classes of society, no matter how small their income might be. They are the backbone of its activity. The strange thing is that these classes, which represent close to 80 percent of most societies, might be viewed, wrongly, as a burden and an element of pressure on economic resources, while they can be the main source of financing for development and the increase of the workforce in society.

However, that does not mean that the Islamic bank is not concerned with individuals who enjoy financial surpluses. To the contrary, as long as the people who possess these surpluses believe in the role of the Islamic bank in terms of its basic attention to man and the investment of money as a means and not a commodity, investment can lead to profit or loss. But in general this class does not represent the basic element in the transactions, which is the opposite of what happens with traditional banks, and therefore the Islamic banks are considered supplementary to existing banks and not in competition with them.

The question which arises here is, how can the ordinary individual change his behavior vis-a-vis his salary or his income, and how can he be made accustomed to organizing his spending by means of an organization qualified to put the interest from these savings to general use vis-a-vis the individual and the society? This is the basic function of the Islamic bank. What is certain is that the person who has a total income, no matter how limited it might be, spends it not at one stroke but over a period of a month, whenever he gets his salary, and, if he deposits it in an Islamic bank and gets part of it in successive periods, that gives the bank the opportunity to collect large sums which it can invest on behalf of the people who have savings themselves and on behalf of the society, of course.

AL-HAWADITH: When did the experiment of the Islamic banks begin? How widespread is it now?

Dr al-Najjar: The first experiment with a modern Islamic bank began in Egypt, specifically in the governorate of al-Daqahliyah, in 1963, under the title of local savings banks, whose number reached 11. However, the experiment collapsed with the June 1967 defeat, for political reasons, in spite of their great success during these 4 years and their contribution to solving many of the problems whose likes the economy of Egypt is suffering from now. The number of clients conducting transactions in 4 years reached 1.25 million resulting in the establishment of 25 factories and projects, in addition to service agencies such as schools, health units and so forth. During President al-Sadat's term, the attempt was revived with the establishment of the Nasir Social Bank in the early seventies, but it is not currently progressing on the basis on which it was founded. During this same period, the secretariat of the Islamic conference asked Egypt to prepare the statutes for Islamic banks throughout the world. These statutes were the basis on which these banks are founded in various countries of the Islamic world now. The late King Faysal Ibn 'Abd-al-'Aziz embraced this approach and the Islamic Development Bank was established in Jeddah. That is the first bank which has borne the name of Islam since its establishment, and 26 Islamic countries took part in its establishment. Its members now number 44 Islamic countries. This was followed by the emergence of such regional banks as the Dubayy Islamic Bank, the Sudanese Faysal Islamic Bank then the Kuwaiti House of Finance. The experiment now has spread among most Islamic countries to the point where it has become a comprehensive system which is applied to all parts of the banking system in Pakistan, Iran and the Sudan.

In 1975, the International Federation of Islamic Banks was formed under the chairmanship of Prince Muhammad al-Faysal in order to exchange expertise, correct errors and protect the course of the experiment from dominance by religious sentiment. The federation members at this point number 23 Islamic countries and negotiations are still under way with more than 10 countries for membership in it.

One thing that is worth mentioning here is that Dr al-Najjar said that the custodian of the Two Holy Places King Fahd Ibn 'Abd-al-'Aziz, has told him at more than one meeting "Do not imagine that the Islamic banks are far from our eyes or our support. The Islamic banks everywhere are the kingdom's banks, but the kingdom must begin with the experiment only after confirming the fitness and the success of these institutions. Proceed with God's blessings until the system becomes perfected."

AL-HAWADITH: What has the experiment achieved so far?

Dr al-Najjar: During the first stage of the establishment of Islamic banks, I can say that a number of important goals have been achieved which are embodied in the following:

First, the banks have been able to win governments over and get them to agree that activity can start in more than one country. That has taken about 20 years.

Second, as soon as their activity started, the extent of the depth of the conviction of members of society in the philosophy on which these banks are founded became apparent. So much money flowed to them that in Egypt alone this came to more than 3 billion pounds in the course of a few years.

Third, the Islamic banks managed to innovate methods of legal financing in which usury is absent and which at the same time are compatible with modern financing requirements, such as financing leases, participation, bidding and so forth which were not known to thinking in the past.

Fourth, the Islamic banks have opened the door wide to individual juridical interpretations to keep abreast with the requirements of the age and have created a modern current in the consciousness of many jurists. This is a great enrichment of the resources of jurisprudence in the Islamic world.

Fifth, they have paved the way for economic thinkers to evaluate and criticize the practices of these banks, which is helping to give concrete form to the nucleus of the modern Islamic economic school.

It is possible to state affirmatively that the Islamic banks have not yet managed to perform their integrated, effective role in economic development. The basic issue on which the role of the Islamic bank is founded is decentralization and contact with every individual where he is. Therefore, the Islamic banks must begin free from centralization, so that they can reach the overwhelming majority of the people. The persons conducting transactions in the banks can deal directly with the client and have full knowledge of his personality. It is highly conceivable that the two parties might take part in a single project, and the guarantee would be the project itself, mutual trust and the practical expertise available to the two parties.

AL-HAWADITH: In spite of these goals which have been achieved, there are negative features in the banks themselves. Why aren't these corrected?

Dr al-Najjar: I share your opinion. What we are seeing now in the Islamic banks in terms of greater attention to people with high incomes and owners of financial surpluses and the failure to strive adequately to attract the majority of the people with limited incomes, can be attributed to the nature of the stage during which the

Islamic banks began their activity, since the human apparatus for operating them was not qualified or directed to understand and carry out their philosophy and goals.

Therefore these banks sought the help of employees of traditional banks who brought with them a philosophy which is different from Islamic economic philosophy. At this point obscurity and ambiguity were present. The experiment actually affirmed in the course of the past years that the most dangerous thing the Islamic banks faced was the dominance of the traditional banking mentality. The announcement of a request for positions in Islamic banks is supposed to include a specific condition, which is that the applicant not have any experience in "traditional" banking activity!

AL-HAWADITH: What are the other difficulties facing the Islamic banks?

Dr al-Najjar: The difficulties are embodied in three points:

1. The lack of clarity of vision among supervising agencies, represented by the central banks and governments, who deal with the Islamic banks as economic and social institutions or try to portray them as religious agencies. The strange thing is that this confusion and wrongful fear are present at a time when development in these countries imposes the requirement that the banks play their part by getting all members of society to participate in saving, development and investment.

2. The absence of an adequate personnel system so far, in most Islamic banks and the failure of such systems to have a complete understanding of the banks' philosophy and ability to perform their mission in full.

3. The absence of clarity of vision as well among the media and consequently its effect on public opinion.

Dr al-Najjar presented two specific recommendations, the first embodied in the need to establish a special central bank for supervising the Islamic banks in every country and the second in having committees formed at a high level in which the government will participate, represented by the central bank and the International Federation of Islamic Banks, as a technical body, as well as the embassies involved, to set out rules and principles for advancing and carrying out the necessary strategy for comprehensive economic and social development, which is very necessary for eliminating inflation and careless consumer behavior.

AL-HAWADITH: How, however, can this be applied in a practical manner?

Dr al-Najjar: The experiment has actually been applied in Cyprus in a sound and ideal manner. A few years ago the Faysal Islamic Bank was established. Although it was established in a poor area with a capital of just \$1

million, it managed to attract more than 40 percent of the inhabitants, who became regular clients; the bank became one of the most important features of the island of Cyprus and helped solve many of these inhabitants' economic and social problems. Conducting transactions with the bank has become part of the citizens' daily life. The volume of transactions now amounts to more than \$20 million.

11887

Awqaf Minister Discusses New Roles for Mosques

45040006 Cairo AKHIR SA'AH in Arabic
23 Sep 87 p 14

[Interview with Minister of Awqaf Dr Muhammad 'Ali Mahjub, by Hassan 'Allam: 'New Tasks for the Mosques'; time and place not given]

[Text] In his interview with *Akhir Sa'ah*, Dr Muhammad 'Ali Mahjub, the minister of awqaf, said that coordination is taking place during these days to link all popular organizations active in the Islamic mission field, including the Society of Friends of the Sunnah, the Shari'ah Association, the Clan of Muhammad (al-'Ashirah al-Muhammadiyah), and the Sufi orders, so as to agree on a unified working formula in the missionary field. Missionaries have been supplied with complete cultural libraries, and advanced specialized training centers have been established to confront the problems that go along with the spirit of the age.

The minister of awqaf discussed the issue of the 70,000 "family" mosques (i.e. mosques supported from private or family ("ahli") waqfs) and the ministry's measures to support them with approximately 6 million [Egyptian] pounds, now that it has become clear that large numbers of them are without supervision or preachers. Rules are now being discussed with the provincial governors to regulate the establishment of new small mosques on the ground floor of residential buildings.

Dr Muhammad 'Ali Mahjub also spoke about case-merits, loans, and citizen assistance amounting to 3 million pounds in a single year.

[Question] How can those active in Islamic missionary affairs be expected to perform their mission while suffering from numerous problems, foremost among them being lack of job advancement, housing, etc.? Given the fact that someone who lacks a thing cannot give it, shouldn't we be providing them with an appropriate standard of living?

[Answer] True, the Ministry of Awqaf in particular has been suffering from a noticeable lack of job advancement that has lasted for more than 13 years. However, thanks be to God, the largest number of promotions in the history of the ministry has been recorded. As of 1974, approximately 2,145 citizens had obtained promotion to

the highest rank. Thus we are opening the way for coming new generations. In the High Council for Islamic Affairs, promotion included 69 out of 100 individuals, and the rest will advance according to the normal cycle. I finished setting this up within the last few days with Dr Husayn Kazim, head of the central apparatus for organization and administration. Indeed, the matter has gone far beyond that to a review of the general office structure of the Ministry of Awqaf, so as to open the door to higher office holders and to provide second and third echelon employment. Thus justice will be realized for all, and President Mubarak's directives for improving the situation of government workers will be implemented.

Most leadership positions used to be "by deputation." We have decided to eliminate these positions [and replace them] with fixed ranks, so that conditions can stabilize.

The ministry has bought buses and cars for about 120,000 pounds to alleviate the transportation problem for employees through reduced-rate subscriptions. We are doing our utmost to physically improve the level of the Islamic missionary. We have raised his reimbursement for lessons and the remuneration for the Friday sermon. We are now studying the establishment of a complete hospital for Islamic missionaries. As for housing, we have agreed on construction of three buildings in the city of Alexandria (economical housing). Each building will contain between 60 and 80 apartments, earmarked for Awqaf Ministry employees, without advance payments, and with installments not to exceed 15 pounds a month.

From the social and psychological point of view, they have obtained their full rights, thanks be to God!

Educational Preparation of Missionaries

[Question] But how can the level of these missionaries be raised intellectually, so that sermons and religion lessons will not be formalistic, when they ought to be modern?

[Answer] We must motivate imams and preachers to carry out their mission with careful and enlightened thought. One needs a full education appropriate to the spirit of the age and to its problems in the current period. The missionary's information must be continually renewed. To this end, we have done a number of things. First and foremost, we have furnished the missionary with a library containing all the books that will help him in performing his mission. We have established a cultural library for every imam. These libraries have cost the ministry about 600,000 pounds. Half of this figure was borne by the ministry. The other half is not to be borne by the missionary, for we have decided to disburse to each of them 5 pounds a month, earmarked to cover half the value. Thus, he will not bear any of the costs of these libraries or personal education expenses.

We are setting up a task force of our enlightened scholars to fully ascertain the facts of the situation. Today's missionary's problem is that modern problems have come up recently in society which are the talk of all young people today. Young people are really confused about them. The true and enlightened position of religion on these issues must be heard. For this reason, we decided to establish an "advanced institute for missionary training," and we opened it at the beginning of this month. At this institute, six of the best Islamic scholars in Egypt will lecture and deal with the most serious current problems in all fields: religion, law, society, and psychology. The length of study in this institute will be about a month. Each training course will include about 50 missionaries, i.e., five selected from each of the ten governorates. Their residence will be fully paid for by the Ministry of Awqaf. The daily period of study will be 4 hours: 2 hours for lectures, and 2 hours for discussion. In the evening, we shall set aside a large mosque in which the missionary can lecture to the citizenry on the basis of the discussions he has heard and the thoughts and issues he has absorbed. Thus we shall have integrated the theoretical and practical sides.

Rotation of Imams

Another thing we are now studying is rotating the imams in a single neighborhood. For example, instead of an imam's remaining in al-Husayn Mosque for an entire year, he might alternate between the mosques of Sayyidah Zaynab (district) and al-Azhar. In this way, people who frequent the mosques would constantly see new faces, and you would give people new ideas as a result of the differing ideas of the imams. A complete cycle for preachers has been worked out, and all the mosques of the neighborhood will profit from them. I think it will be a successful experiment, because people like variety in preachers. This is the secret of the success of the Shari'ah Association's preachers.

Soon the establishment of an institute to prepare educator-missionaries will be announced for the first time. The Ministry of Awqaf has set up the curricula and lecturers for it. Any person who sees in himself an ability for Islamic missionary work can enroll in the institute. At the end of the period of study, the ministry will award him a licence of competence for Islamic missionary work—and it will be official. This institute will take care of many things we really need. It will be a supplementary source from which missionaries will go out to the mosques of the Ministry of Awqaf.

[Question] Unlike government mosques, many privately endowed ["ahli"] mosques are suffering from a noticeable lack of services. Where is the Awqaf ministry's assistance to them? What is the number of these privately endowed mosques?

[Answer] Mosques, in my estimation, are the cornerstone of the ministry's work. Government mosques

supervised and fully administered by the ministry number about 8,000, with 10,000 imams. This year alone we appointed 2,600 new graduates who joined the Islamic mission field at the Ministry of Awqaf.

Six Million Pounds for Privately Endowed ["Ahli"] Mosques

As for the privately endowed mosques that the ministry aids with funds from its budget (about 40,000 mosques), we give them yearly assistance of about 6 million pounds for caretaker employees, and about 1/2 million pounds just for preachers (21,500 preachers with higher degrees: doctorate or masters). Frankly, the ministry is unable to keep up with all the privately endowed mosques in Egypt from the physical point of view, since they now number about 70,000 mosques. Most of them are small prayer rooms. There are in fact mosques that find no one—either associations or organizations—to supervise them. As far as possible, the Ministry of Awqaf is trying to establish a plan for annexing them, so that we can guarantee this kind of missionary activity. The Council of Commissioners has approved this plan, so that we can start with these mosques.

The time has come for us to review the subject of small mosques that are set up randomly in buildings. We are not going to touch those that actually exist; but for those to be set up in the future, there are new regulations which we are studying with the provincial governors, in order to regulate this matter so that small mosques with no one to preach in them will not exist.

[Question] More than one group and more than one agency do Islamic missionary work. Is it possible to gather all these agencies to work within the framework of a unified plan through which they will benefit Islam and Muslims?

[Answer] We are trying to create coordination and linkage between the Ministry of Awqaf and the popular organizations that work in the Islamic missionary field. We have the government agencies represented by al-Azhar and the Awqaf Ministry. The efforts of the other popular agencies are scattered: the Society of Friends of the Sunnah is by itself, the Shari'ah Association is separate, the Clan of Muhammad (al-'Ashirah al-Muhammadiyah) exists independently, and the Sufi orders are somewhere else. If these many large sectors were coordinated with each other through a unified council including the heads of each of these agencies, a full meeting would take place between those who work in this field and we would have added new cadres to the official agencies. I have in fact contacted the Society of Friends of the Sunnah, the Shari'ah Association, the Clan of Muhammad, and the Sufi orders with the goal of creating a common line for these bodies through a unified council to be headed by His Excellency Grand Imam Shaykh Jad-al-Haqq 'Ali Jad-al-Haqq, the rector of al-Azhar, who is the primary official in charge of

Islamic missionary activity. I have in fact obtained the complete understanding and approval of some of these leaders for implementing this new idea, God willing.

Combating Private Lessons

[Question] Where are the clean collegiate mosques equipped with all services, where the Muslim can find his place during his leisure time, perform his religious observances, and which, at the same time, will be centers of cultural enlightenment that combat private lessons and the exploitation of private hospitals? Can this dream be realized?

[Answer] No one differs about the need for mosques to be clean and neat. The reason for the state into which some mosques have gotten is the lack of workers. Most of the mosques have carpets or wall-to-wall carpeting on the floor. Our plan this year is to renovate this carpeting. We shall use machines for cleaning a number of these mosques, instead of manual cleaning, with a view toward spreading this practice shortly. Also, we are going to run a mosque cleanliness competition between awqaf districts. The employees supervising mosques which are evaluated as clean will receive prizes.

Very shortly, a number of major mosques will be chosen in each governorate to be collegiate mosques. This means that an equipped medical clinic, a section for teaching the Qur'an, and an elementary school for strengthening students in their studies will be set up in these mosques. We will begin the experiment in Cairo and then spread it to the remaining governorates.

The citizen will find a mosque in which to pray, a clinic where he and his family will be treated, and an elementary school for teaching the Qur'an. As you say, the mosque will combat private lessons and the rise in the price of treatment.

[Question] What is the role of the Ministry of Awqaf in correcting the erroneous ideas of some young people?

[Answer] We have set up a "Youth Administration" in the Ministry of Awqaf under the general director of mosques. We are trying hard to make it well-known officially. It has actually begun working through youth camps which have been established. We have laid down the working plan of this administration in for the next phase. All of its activity and public are from young university students and workers. Enlightened Islamic scholars answer their questions and inquiries in order to correct all erroneous ideas and beliefs.

Review of Dialogue Symposia

I have agreed with my colleague, Mr Safwat al-Sharif, the minister of information, to set up a task force and coordinate between Islamic scholars of the Ministry of Awqaf and the information media as regards appropriate programs and religious courses to be presented by the

auditory and visual media. We shall guarantee that enlightened religious thought is carried on radio and television, after we have supplied them with modern Islamic scholars who are specialists in the most important issues of the hour, so that our public can experience true Islamic thought and the presentation of successful symposia.

[Question] What is the role of the Ministry of Awqaf in relation to works of charity and relief for people of limited income?

[Answer] We offer aid, facilities, and loans to citizens. Any citizen has the right to present his case. It will be investigated by trustworthy hands so that what it merits can be determined. During this year alone, we offered 3 million pounds in assistance and loans, benefiting 12,424 citizens.

We are now on the way to establishing "apprenticeship institutes," so that asylums for orphans and the needy will be transformed into craft institutes. We shall teach them handicrafts and trades and help them realize a prosperous life. 12937

ISRAEL

Jewish Emigration From USSR Noted
15011715 Tel Aviv IDF Radio In Hebrew
1500 GMT 1 Nov 87

[Summary] Some 871 Jews left the Soviet Union in October but only 205 arrived in Israel. From the beginning of the year, 6,251 people were allowed to leave the Soviet Union, but only 1,549 came to Israel.

Rabbis in Territories Support Arab Emigration
15011426 Tel Aviv MA'ARIV in Hebrew 1 Nov 87 p A6

[Report by Menahem Raha']

[Text] Of the rabbis who live beyond the Green Line, 62 percent support the views of Minister Yosef Shapira, who favors encouraging Arabs to emigrate without the use of force. Another 15 percent also favor the use of force. This emerges from a poll recently conducted among rabbis beyond the Green Line and distributed for publication by Minister Shapira's office.

The poll was conducted a short time ago by the Tzomet Institute in Gush 'Ezyon. Engineer Rabbi Yisrael Rozen, the director of the institute, said a questionnaire with the title "The War Against Terrorism" had been sent some time ago to 120 rabbis, heads of yeshivas, and religious schools in Judaea and Samaria.

One of the questions in the poll dealt with emigration. As stated, 62 percent support encouraging emigration, and another 15 percent also support the use of force. Ten percent of the interviewees opposed emigration, and 13 percent said it was not yet time to discuss it. Rabbi

Rozen has said that what can be learned from the poll is that 77 percent of those supporting emigration are rabbis, who represent public opinion.

Outstanding among those who support the position of Minister Shapira is former Knesset Member Hanan Porat. In the poll, he supported encouraging emigration without the use of force.

Minister Shapira claimed that what he meant was that university graduates who do not find work in their professions and who are directing their frustrations into hostile activity and are inciting the Arab population against Israel should be encouraged to emigrate.

Last night the MAPAM younger generation promised to collect \$20,000 to "encourage the emigration of the Kahanist racist Minister Shapira." They called on the National Religious Party younger generation last night to condemn Shapira, "who is setting the mark of Cain on your brows."

0167

Tourism Agreement Signed With Spain
15011919 Tel Aviv IDF Radio in Hebrew
1500 GMT 1 Nov 87

[Summary] Israel and Spain today signed an agreement for the promotion of tourism. The agreement gives El Al landing rights in Barcelona, will enhance exchanges of professional information on tourism, and will allow for an increase in the number of educational grants. The agreement will also promote the sale in North and South America of tourist package deals to Israel and Spain. The Spanish tourism minister said that this, the first agreement of its kind Spain has signed with another country, reflects its affinity with Israel and the Jewish people.

Trade Agreement Reached With Portugal
44230045b Tel Aviv HA'ARETZ in Hebrew
13 Aug 87 p 5

[Article by Dan Sagir, HA'ARETZ correspondent: "Israel and Portugal Agreed on a Customs Arrangement and Trade Terms"]

[Text] Israel and Portugal have formulated an agreement on the terms of trade between them in connection with Portugal joining the European Market. This agreement is similar to that concluded with Spain; both agreements will be implemented before the end of the year.

According to this agreement, Portugal will grant Israel a customs exemption and will cancel import restrictions on most Israeli products. In exchange, Israel will grant Portugal Common Market terms, excluding the list of products defined as "sensitive," such as textiles, foodstuffs, cosmetics, leatherware, plywood, fibers, wood-free paper, furniture, jewelry, ceramics, and glassware. With respect to these products, it was concluded during

discussions that duties would be lowered gradually until the end of the transition period on 1 January 1993, when duties and restrictions between the two nations would be cancelled completely.

Zohar Peri, deputy head of foreign trade at the Ministry of Industry and Commerce, noted that during talks with Portugal representatives the importance of protecting textile products, with which the Portuguese industry competes with the Israeli industry, was stressed. At a certain stage the negotiations reached a deadlock and, in order to prevent their breakdown, it was decided to reach an agreement that would include certain important restrictions on both parties. 11439

Histadrut Seen Apathetic Toward Discrimination of Workers
44230045a Tel Aviv HA'ARETZ in Hebrew
12 Aug 87 p 9

[Article by Yehudit Vinqler: 'Cliches and The Embarrassing Truth']

[Text] This week the Histadrut again took out of its long-term storage the subject of employment of Arabs from the territories. The data presented to the Central Committee points to more than 90,000 Arabs from the territories who work in the Israeli economy. Only 50,000 are employed through the Employment Department at the Ministry of Labor. There is nothing new in this data. Indeed, there appears to be a small increase in the number of Arabs from the territories who work within the green line, but the ratio of those employed through the government and those "organized" by village leaders remains fifty-fifty.

From a declarative standpoint the Histadrut position on this matter is clear. Ever since the days of the Alignment administrations the Histadrut has requested that it be in charge of ensuring social rights, including professional protection, which at least on the surface was supposed to reduce the gap between the wages of workers from the territories and those of the Jews. Now and in the past, from the time of Levi Eshkol as prime minister and his followers, Histadrut heads have demanded that the Labor Party establish a position on the issue of employment of Arabs from the territories resulting from the political and social concepts of the Labor Party.

Concerning ideology, Histadrut heads had no argument with prime ministers from their party, but the differences of opinion focused on the claim by the political echelon to the effect that any attempt at organizing workers from the territories within the framework of the Israeli Trade Union would be interpreted both among friends from the Socialist International and political elements hostile to Israel as an additional step on the road toward annexation of the population from the territories to the State of Israel.

Attacks of Criticism

On the other hand, the Histadrut is the one that has absorbed quite a few attacks of criticism at the International Labor Organization, owing to the gap in conditions and the wage level between workers from the territories and Israelis. The Histadrut's demand that professional supervision of Arabs from the territories be its responsibility does not stem only from their concern for the Arabs' welfare. For all practical purposes it was they who destroyed the Histadrut's impressive achievements in the construction sector and who threaten similar destruction of the food and textile sectors, which do not demand special professional skills.

The other aspect of the demand to transfer the handling of Arabs from the territories to the Histadrut is financial. If the money for territorial allocations were poured through the pension funds of construction, food, and service workers into its till, perhaps it would be possible to reduce the substantial rates, for example, the collapse of the pension fund for construction workers. Moreover, curbing cheap labor, which, in fact, means lowering wages for Jews as well, or a lack of a chance for Jews to get work in construction, food, service, and agricultural sectors, even if they wanted to, would help the Histadrut to increase wages as part of sectorial agreements.

In actuality, the Histadrut did very little to advance the demands it trumpeted more than once. Two years ago the Histadrut of Construction Workers promised vigorous actions to eradicate unorganized labor. It established patrol units, held isolated demonstrations for show, and fell silent as before. Gid'on Ben Israel, who officiated at the administration of the International Labor Organization for a number of years, managed to persuade the organization to place the transfer of the handling of Arabs from the territories to the Histadrut under its patronage for a year. The executive committee was convinced that the interference of the International Labor Organization, which is part of the UN Organization, would constitute pressure on the Israeli government to change its position.

In practice no change has taken place. Indeed, the Histadrut enjoys a regular income amounting to 1 percent of the funds of social differentials of organized workers from the territories. The money is transferred into its till through the Ministry of Labor according to the "organizational fee" clause, but workers' unions do little, if anything, to justify the receipt of this money. The Histadrut, as one who lays claims to the crown of a social movement, hardly lifts a finger to eradicate the outright disgrace of employing workers from the territories under shameful conditions throughout the state, just as it does not get too excited over the implications of the disgraceful encounter between these workers and residents of the State.

Horror Story

In Tel Aviv a horror story is told about an owner of a well-known restaurant, who employed a detective to find out which of his Arab employees stole food products and was stunned to learn through hidden cameras that kitchen workers spit into the food, urinated into it, and even masturbated into pots. Whether this story is absolutely or only partly true, there is no doubt that it is an indicator of the harsh feelings resulting from the encounter between workers from the territories—who need jobs within the green line at any cost—and Jews who buy their services.

Several years ago the Histadrut established a committee for affairs concerning Arabs from the territories, which was headed by Yitzhaq Gil'adi, secretary of the Histadrut of Metal and Electronic Workers. Gil'adi is not among the upper ranks of the Histadrut, and the trade union which he heads is not problematic among the trade unions hurt by the employment of cheap workers. These considerations did not bother the upper ranks. This week Gil'adi was able to repeat the cliché claiming that secretaries of trade unions at workers' councils must see to it that the employer supplements the rights to the payments and social conditions given by the payroll department of the employment service. This is throwing sand in the eyes, because without a massive Histadrut action nothing will be done in practice.

The Histadrut now promises to intensify patrols at work places in order to ascertain where unorganized workers from the territories are. A model examination will also be held at a number of work places with regard to the operation of the law and labor agreements, including the minimum wage law. Arab representatives from the Central Committee—Yusif Qar'ah and Nawwaf Maslahah—will join the Gil'adi Committee.

Only those who are not familiar with the decisions adopted on this subject in the past can pin their hopes on the new decisions adopted by the central committee this week. The naked truth is that the matter does not seem to truly oblige Histadrut heads to roll up their sleeves and mobilize their organizational and political ability in order to change the reality.

Off the record, Histadrut heads place the responsibility for the lack of any action on the Likud, claiming that Prime Minister Shamir and his predecessor oppose transferring supervision of workers from the territories to the Histadrut mainly in order not to strengthen the Histadrut and the Labor Party from an economic and political standpoint.

If, indeed, the position of the Histadrut had been decisive, Caesar would have undoubtedly tried to convince his party institutions. It seems that both the Labor Party and the Likud are equally satisfied with the existing

situation, because, if they were not, the handling would have been different and the arena of labor relations and the social arena would have changed.

11439

El Al Reports Profit for Fiscal Year
442300466 Tel Aviv YEDI'OT AHARONOT in Hebrew
20 Aug 87 p 7

[Text] Yesterday the El Al company reported a profit of \$15.2 million in the 1986-87 fiscal year. This is the company's first profit after 8 consecutive years of losses.

The press conference yesterday to report on the balance sheet, called by El Al general manager Rafi Harlev and the temporary receiver, Attorney Amram Blum, failed to take place, after the aviation correspondents learned that some of the balance sheet items had already appeared in one of the newspapers. In a majority vote, the newsmen decided to content themselves with the printed balance sheet distributed to them and not to hold the press conference.

In the past fiscal year, El Al registered a record turnover of \$567 million. The operational profit before financing expenses came to \$34.9 million. The number of passengers flown by the company in the past fiscal year was 1.5 million, which means an increase of approximately 9 percent over the previous year. The average occupancy percentage on El Al flights came to 75.1 percent in the past fiscal year, and was one of the highest in the world of aviation.

El Al profits for fiscal year 1986-87 are all the more impressive considering the fact that in the same year IATA-member international flight companies lost about \$200 million on passenger flights.

By the end of the year, El Al will receive two modern 737 aircraft which will be operated on short and medium-range lines. That will mark the first stage of a long-term acquisition program, in which some \$1.5 billion will be invested in the coming years.

El Al operates four 767 and two 737 airplanes that were directly purchased by the Israeli government and put at the disposal of the company. The balance sheet states that the arrangements for paying the service fees for the planes have not yet been decided.

Teshet, El Al's subsidiary for tourist services and food catering, also ended the fiscal year with a \$1.6 million profit. General manager Hayim Haham said that the profits expected for this year will be even higher.

The El Al balance sheet, whose cover page lists the names of all the company workers in Israel and abroad, will be distributed to all personnel in the next few days.

12782

Kibbutz Sends Shipment of Armored Vehicles to South Africa
442300466 Tel Aviv YEDI'OT AHARONOT in Hebrew
18 Aug 87 p 17

[Article by Arie Keisel: "Kibbutz Armored Vehicles Used To Scatter Demonstrations in South Africa"]

[Text] At the end of the past week, the Israeli police exhibited three new armored vehicles designed for scattering demonstrations. The armored vehicles were manufactured at Kibbutz Bet Alfa. Five such armored vehicles were recently sent from the kibbutz to South Africa in a special shipment. There, as is known, they do not serve for decorative purposes. Many of the blacks demonstrating in the streets of Johannesburg and Pretoria have been dispersed with the aid of those armored vehicles, which bear the none too prominently displayed logo MADE IN ISRAEL.

Not everyone at Bet Alfa was enthusiastic about it. In fact, a storm arose at the kibbutz. "This export has had a severe effect on some of our leftist members," said kibbutz secretary Giora Aloni. This "military export" of what the kibbutz members refer to as the "artillery gun," was profitable. On the other hand, the kibbutz has leftists among its members, and their views must be taken into consideration too. The storm has not yet died down. At kibbutz meetings, many people stated that they will not agree that the kibbutz plant, located in the heart of Emeq Yizre'el, should continue to cell a vehicle of such violent potential to totalitarian countries and repressive regimes.

In the wake of the kibbutz members' protests, its economists grasped that the ideology governing a kibbutz society must be in some way taken into account too. Principles such as equality and democracy, for example. Consequently, it was decided not to export "the gun" to totalitarian regimes. Except that the decision did not prevent the shipment of the first five "guns" to South Africa. The revenue from this was \$80,000, which went straight from the pocket of the white apartheid government into the kibbutz pocket.

The active production of "the gun" began at the kibbutz 3 years ago, when a local engineer completed the plans for a vehicle for scattering demonstrations. Before that, Bet Alfa's trailers plant was manufacturing fire engines. Later it also built all the armored "Brinks" vehicles used to transport money. The plant, which employs 25 people, became profitable and made a name for itself.

And then came the idea of manufacturing the "gun." The plant people were enthusiastic. There was no need to buy know-how from Nicaragua or Chile. Everything was indigenous. There are enough demonstrations in Israel to provide production know-how. The development began.

The "gun" is an armored vehicle that comes in various sizes and is manned by a team of four or five men, depending on the size of the demonstration. There is a driver, a commanding officer, and two to three operators. Those are the "fighters."

The vehicle can be loaded with gas, foam, or water blended with a dye that sticks to the clothes and skin, thus making it easier for the army or police to identify participants after the demonstration.

Giora Aloni, the kibbutz secretary, says that the "gun's" big advantage is that it sends "pulses," meaning that it has a firing rhythm. The rhythm can be adjusted by the vehicle's commanding officer: "You can select your target and fire whatever ammunition you want. Can it be fatal, you are asking? I do not think so. I have not been fired upon, but I definitely think that it is not a fatality-producing weapon."

[Question] What do you think about tear gas?

[Answer] It does not kill. As I said, we can fire gas or foam in various colors, which adds to the effective scattering of the demonstration.

Aloni says that the kibbutz has nothing to be ashamed of. "What do people want? The plant is profitable, and there are demonstrations that have to be dispersed. So far, the Israeli police has purchased three 'guns,' two small ones and one 'mini.' Pictures of the 'guns,' painted in the colors of the Israeli police, appeared in last week's press.

"The plant has done good staff work. They have prepared colorful catalogues listing one by one the advantages of the Israeli export vehicle. The French received them with enthusiasm. Two 'guns' are in the process of being built for the French police. A delegation of French policemen came to Bet Alfa a few months ago. They toured the modest facilities and, after some initial skepticism, they became enthusiastic about the Israeli product. It would seem that our reputation is still good."

Aloni says that the plant has begun an advertising campaign in Europe. The British are now the target, and they have already studied the prospectus. "I think that there will be great demand for the 'gun,' because it is inexpensive and is a very successful Israeli development."

[Question] And the kibbutz has no problems about the armored vehicle?

[Answer] No. We have no problem. If we had an order from Chile, that might pose a problem.

[Question] And if there will be such an order?

[Answer] We will not sell. It has been decided that we would not sell to Chile, Nicaragua, or any totalitarian regime. We will not allow demonstrations of blacks or any other minority to be scattered with our guns.

[Question] What about the territories?

[Answer] The IDF has shown interest. They have already come and seen. No orders have been placed yet, but we hope that there will be. I do not expect that to pose any problem. True, the plant is not popular with the Kibbutz Movement, and guns such as this or other types are definitely problematic, but we can live with it.

12782

Meir Kahane's Kakh Girls Camp Described
44230046d Tel Aviv MA'ARIV in Hebrew
17 Aug 87 p 12a

[Article by Arie Bender: "KAKH Girls Camp: Marches, Sorties, and Everything that the Boys Learn, Except for Firearms Training"]

[Text] A merry group of young girls, dressed in long skirts and yellow blouses adorned with the symbol of the clenched fist, was seated on the lawn of the field school at 'Ofra. Led by a woman instructor, they sang the "Kingdom of Hermon" and "Let the Sun Rise." At first sight, another youth camp full of youthful fun and gaiety. This, however, is not just another camp: these are the girls of the Kakh movement, followers of Rabbi Kahane and his teachings.

Anyone who expected to find here young people with hooves and horns was mistaken. The girls are pretty and nice, and so are their young instructors. Only the program is different. "Our girls have a most important role to play, because they will be the home educators, the educators of the future generation," said our guide Nati 'Ozri proudly. In order to prepare them for that role, the girls undergo a special process at camp designed to form and unite them. A team of instructors led by an American-born young man, Mike Ben-Ya'akov, indoctrinates them with the Kakh ideology and teachings.

The ideological part is one of the central factors in the girls' formation process. However, learning theories alone is not enough. "The girls learn everything that our boys did; the emphasis is on devotion and self-sacrifice, on fighting for Israel and building the Greater Israel," says Mike the instructor. The boys learned how to bear up under investigation, how to evade military and police roadblocks, and so forth. Mike refuses to go into the details of the girls' training program, but he admits that they go on exhausting marches, night sorties, field orientation trips, etc. "Everything that the boys learn, except for firearms training," adds Mike. The young people of Kakh have learned their lesson from the negative publicity that accompanied the boys' camp. "We do not like

the press. You are destroying our camp," they said angrily. There is nothing illegal about their program of activities, although it would displease many.

The girls live in two rooms of a well kept hostel. During their stay at the camp, they are trained in self-defense. "We teach them how to defend themselves if attacked by an Arab in the Old City," explains Mike, walking around the grounds with a powerful walkie-talkie. Every few minutes the voice of the party spokesman, Baruh Marzel of the party's offices in Jerusalem, comes through requesting updates. Yesterday around midnight, the girls had a surprise: a night sortie under the leadership of Mike, Nati, and a few other Kakh youths, one of them armed with an Uzi submachine gun for safety. Yesterday the girls took a trip to Ma'yan Hashino'ah. In store for them tonight is the culminating point of their short camp stay—4 days altogether—a lecture by the party leader, Rabbi Meir Kahane, and one by former Prisoner of Zion Ya'aqov Levin.

Only seven girls and a woman instructor came to the camp. Mike says that another 15 girls will join tomorrow. According to Baruh Marzel, an additional group of girls was in a similar program at another location. Tonight, the camp girls were scheduled to present their objectives before the media. The people of 'Ofra are not particularly happy about the presence of the Kakh young people. When he first heard about the existence of the camp within the perimeter of his settlement, secretary Yehuda Dinar reacted with amazement and said, "There has never been and there will never be any such thing." Later, however, after meeting with the instructors and the trainees, he amended his tone somewhat and said: "Ofra does not identify with the camp. We do not host them and they are not our guests. The 'Ofra academy is a completely autonomous institution. The Kakh young people booked sleeping accommodations with us, catering, and a classroom. We accepted them as we would accept anyone else. Had we known about their coming beforehand, we would have taken a stand, but we did not know."

Immediately after learning about the presence of the young Kakh members within the settlement, the secretary of 'Ofra hastened to check out their training program: "I examined the program and saw that it did not include any weapons training. Most of the program features lectures. I see no problem with the program." Nevertheless, it appeared that the presence of the Kakh young people at 'Ofra caused resentment among some of the inhabitants. One of them told MA'ARIV that the academy principal had received letters from people requesting him to ensure that the Kakh young people do not receive firearms training within 'Ofra. The manager of the youth hostel said that he was going to request the Kakh people not to have Rabbi Kahane's lecture at the hostel. Tonight, the girls were scheduled to have a bonfire, and the next morning they were leaving 'Ofra on a trip.

"I can state that the police investigation is not over yet, but it is nearing its conclusion, and the police have not found anything illegal there," said Police Minister Hayim Bar-Lev on Sunday on the Voice of Israel, in connection with the Kakh youth summer camp. The minister stressed that in his opinion, the photograph that was published in the newspaper, of a young man holding a weapon, did not constitute any violation of the law.

12782

Mystic Cults in Galilee Combated
44230046c Tel Aviv YEDI'OT AHARONOT in Hebrew
20 Aug 87 p 12

[Text] The Yad Le'ahim organization, which combats proselytization, requested all the members of the Jewish Agency's boards of trustees in the United States and all the leaders of American Jewish organizations to send thousands of letters of protest to the state leadership against granting land in the Galilee to mystic sects.

The problem began when, according to Yad Le'ahim members, three outposts in the Galilee, which are supported by the Jewish Agency and the government, were inhabited by members of mystic sects. By appealing to organizations abroad, the Yad Le'ahim members hope to bring public pressure to bear on halting the settlement of the outposts.

Organization activists in the north claim that two of the settlements are inhabited by meditation groups, and the third by members of the Iman sect. According to them, Hare Krishna people also plan to establish a kibbutz-type settlement in the north of the country.

12782

LEBANON

Union President Describes Efforts To Remedy Economic Crisis
44040001a London AL-TADAMUN in Arabic
3-9 Oct 87 pp 39-41

[Article by Mayy 'Abbud: "The Uprising of the Starving Has Started in Lebanon: Is a Revolution Taking Place? Antoine Bisharah Tells AL-TADAMUN: It Is Like the Fox Guarding the Chicken Coop"]

[Text] Serious crises whose likes the country has not witnessed are raging over economic and social conditions in Lebanon today. They are exerting pressure on the overwhelming majority of Lebanese and threatening hundreds of thousands of government employees, workers and people with average and limited incomes and their families with real starvation. In their gravity and results they have started to exceed the political and security crisis that has been going on for 12 years. Many people's tables today have only "dry bread," now that the price of a kilogram of lentils, for example, has come

to 100 Lebanese pounds, a kilogram of rice to 110 pounds, and a package of bread to 35 pounds; a dish of lentils and rice (the poor man's meal) now costs more than 200 pounds.

With respect to fuel and gasoline, you must wait a whole day in line to fill up a tank, if they give it to you, only for 800 pounds; officially it is set at 290 Lebanese pounds. On top of this, the prices of vegetables and essential commodities have come to resemble the stock market, opening at a price and closing at a price, aside from their fluctuation during the day, rising, falling, and disappearing on most occasions. The rate of unemployment has come to 40 percent of the total productive force, which is one of the highest rates in the world. In addition, the incomes of the overwhelming majority of Lebanese, especially workers, government employees and people with limited incomes, have dropped seriously. The minimum wage, relative to the dollar, has reached less than US \$30 a month in 1987, while it came to \$185 in 1975—bearing in mind that a family of five persons requires \$150 to \$200 a month just to provide its essential needs! Thus the index of inflation rose 230 percent from the first of the year to the end of August, since the rise in prices has come to about 560 percent this year.

In the face of the astonishing, frightening silence and absence of conscience among officials and people who have appointed themselves as leaders and bosses over the Lebanese by force, and in the context of the policy of starvation the government is pursuing, the people and the public have exploded. Men, women and children, workers, government employees, and students have gone into the streets and started the "hunger revolution," voicing cries demanding loaves and gasoline. In escalating the movement, the General Labor Union has declared the month of September a month of demonstrations, marches, conferences, and festivals in all areas of Lebanon, concluding with a second comprehensive national union conference that will determine the plan of action and escalation for the next stage.

The most important of the union's demands and objectives are summarized in the concluding statement it declared at the end of the first national union conference held on 7 May 1987. Most briefly, they are the following:

In the political area, a stand against war and the government's economic and social platform of starvation.

In the general and fiscal areas of the economy, approval of the government's economic policy, to prevent continued accelerating collapse.

Approval of the government's fiscal and monetary policy, especially with respect to the Bank of Lebanon's role.

In the social area and with respect to the [standard of living], rectification of wages in accordance with the General Labor Union's price development index and adoption of the moving wage scale.

Importation of medicines by means of the National Social Insurance Fund and implementation of the National Medicine Office project.

Remedy of the state of medical care and alleviation of the living burdens in this area.

Execution of the law on the cooperative foodstuffs import office.

Issuance of a law permitting the Ministry of Education to set installment payments for schools.

Concentration and general application of ordinary means of transport and stimulation of transport by railway.

Unification of the sources of housing loans, supplying them with the necessary liquidity, and moving toward allocating government and municipality open lands for the construction of housing complexes and selling them at carefully studied prices and in manageable installments.

Exertion of pressure to take deterrent measures against hoarders to limit the price hikes of commodities for unjustified reasons.

AL-TADAMUN—BUSINESS met with the chairman of the General Labor Union, Antoine Bisharah, and talked with him about conditions and the union's future measures.

[Question] Why did you wait until September to start your initiative while hunger and inflation have been getting out of hand for some time?

[Answer] In fact, we did not wait until September to start demonstrating and to take action. We started a long time ago, through numerous union meetings and the submission of economic and social programs. In 1986 we declared the month of July as a month of struggle in three stages: the stage of general strike, the stage of a sit-in, and the stage of demonstrations. Of course, the demonstrations were restricted because of security conditions. We are a force for pressure, not an armed force. We believed that national action of this magnitude, of such importance, must not just be restricted to the General Labor Union but must include the people who have been harmed by the war. Therefore we have believed in the need to establish a national conference which will include all the classes of the people involved and occupations. The conference was to be held in January, but was postponed to May so that we could organize it and find a proper place for all classes of

people. The first conference took place. Before the convening of the conference, strikes occurred that involved all areas of Lebanon and asserted the Lebanese people's cohesion and refusal to capitulate and die.

[Question] You previously held a number of demonstrations and strikes that did not lead to any results. Officials did not respond, and the people were no longer interested, since the day of the strike turned into a holiday and day of rest as far as many people were concerned!

[Answer] Basically our strikes and our movement are against the government, since the government does not exist and the government has no conscience. So far, I have not sensed a national conscience on the part of any of them that might cause them to act. On the other hand, there are many problems standing in the citizens' way: there is the problem of the occupation of a nation, the problem of the change of government, the problem of economic collapse, the problem of future planning that is lacking, the problem of the Lebanese people who have lost faith in their country. All these problems that are facing us do not make our road easy. Our road is more difficult, we have chosen it, and we know that it is a long one. Therefore we ourselves are creating hope in the spirit of the people instead of the politicians, who have engendered despair and renunciation of the nation and the pound. Although if another country had the economic indicators that Lebanon has, the pound would have been in its best condition; nonetheless, unfortunately, the political element is what is putting pressure on the pound and making people lose their hope in the nation. Since the pound is one of the most important symbols of the nation and the government, it will be affected by all these things. The problem in itself is very great, and it requires faith on the part of all of us so that we will be able to continue efforts and rectify what is wrong. We have ended the verbal war and the war of salons. We must go out into the street and express our protest and disagreement with what is going on. We must express our view without having the cold frighten us. That is what we are working for.

[Question] What did you mean, that all the demonstrations that have occurred and are occurring have not attained results? Does this mean that the people and the labor forces have no voice or echo?

[Answer] Not at all. The strikes have led and are leading to a very important result, because there is no force in Lebanon that can get all of Lebanon moving as the General Labor Union does. This is a great victory. You are creating solidarity among people. Thus you are openly stressing that there is a coherent people that aspires to life and deserves it. The result is not just a matter of food, drink, and sleep. It is national affiliation, it is identity. We are not a government or an armed force. We are a force for pressure. The strikes and demonstrations have not done anything? That is not true. They have created national solidarity. They have

led to things that we consider secondary and do not talk about, such as the rectification of wages, the correction of family compensation, and the reform of the tax law.

[Question] What are your movement's basic goals?

[Answer] Our basic goals are to request the government to carry out the economic-social program the national conference presented, which we consider the radical solution for the remedy of economic collapse. We have a position against the government's policy of starvation.

[Question] In the event the government does not respond to your demands, where will the escalating measures get?

[Answer] It is the national conference that will determine everything in this regard. Everything will be declared at its time.

[Question] Are you requesting support from the parties and people with de facto influence?

[Answer] In principle we are carrying out social action and are demanding to have an opinion regarding everything that is related to economic and social issues. The opinions of others are their business, and we have nothing to do with them. Each of us has his own field. People who do not like our movement must offer solutions to the problem. However, so far, things are deteriorating and no one has given the solution that we need.

There is no doubt that there is a force on the ground that has its own opinions and plans, and we also have our approaches and plan. I believe that all the political forces on the ground respect the General Labor Union's opinions as much as the union respects its own opinions. The proof is the telegrams of support and affirmation from a large number of parties. Indeed, a number of these parties have called for the marches and demonstrations and have carried them out, and our struggle will continue until the distinction between the exploiter and the exploited is established.

[Question] With respect to the issue of subsidizing fuel, the government says that with the elimination of subsidies the necessary sums will be available, and social, health, and medical services will be provided free of charge. Why are you against the elimination of subsidies?

[Answer] With all due respect to the government, we no longer believe it. Prices have changed more than four or five times. In the past it promised us social and health services a number of times, and we are still waiting. All this is endless talk, which we no longer believe. The problem is not the issue of subsidies; rather, the issue of the pound is the problem. Let them improve the status of the pound, and we will no longer be in need of subsidies. Setting the price of fuel always gave the treasury income; why does it no longer derive income from that? This is

something that has been happening for some years, while there now is a loss because there has been a waste of the treasury's money. There is a deficit in the budget, there is mismanagement in the government. Financial investment priorities are not being made in a feasible, beneficial manner, but are being wasted—for example, the Development and Reconstruction Council's money, which is being wasted on roads, paving, and walls, while it ought to have been invested in housing, factories, hospitals, schools, and areas where a productive and social character exist. However, unfortunately, we talked a lot and expressed our observations on the budget in the chamber of deputies before the parliamentary finance committee, but none of these observations were taken into consideration; rather, they remained mere ink on paper. They approved illusory, unreal budgets, and we today are reaping the fruits of the accumulated mistakes the government has committed.

Why must we tolerate additional austerity today in a society that has been afflicted by wretched poverty? For whose sake? Let me ask the greatest specialist and economic expert in this government if there have been any results from this austerity. I say no, it will not yield any results.

[Question] The government's figures show savings of the sum of 2 billion pounds through elimination of the subsidies on gasoline alone!

[Answer] Those are all inaccurate figures. They have not made any calculations. We do not accept these figures and we are not prepared to discuss them. Let them be so kind as to improve the conditions of the society, to raise people's standard of living and gradually "set things right," and we will be thankful to them. Who is telling us that a tankful of gasoline will not come to 5,000 pounds in 2 months? Who is telling us that they have not left this sector to the private sector, especially in a society that is economically backward, such as the one we are living in today? How can people keep tolerating sacrifices? Sacrifices for whose sake? For the sake of people and a government that is wasting money? When they ask me to pay 1,500 Lebanese pounds for a tankful of gasoline, I myself demand them to cease and desist giving free gasoline to many people who are not in need, and we will name them at the right time. If they want to save hard currency, let them be so kind as to observe the ambassadors, diplomats, and military and cultural attaches spread out in all areas of the world, as if Lebanon is a great country that needs all this throng of people who get dollars at the rate of 7 to 12 pounds!

We no longer believe the promises. Let them act, and in the light of the actions and serious intent in action we will hold discussions and talks with them.

Every day a package of bread goes up 5 pounds and more. I ask the minister of economy, why does he allow these people to control people without intervening? What is the function of the Ministry of Economy? If they

cannot oversee a package of bread and control its price, what provisions and guarantees are these that they are talking about? It is necessary to create strong management that can stand on its own two feet, and give us assured confidence so we can believe it.

[Question] What is your opinion on having dollars held, since everything we buy we buy in dollars?

[Answer] We are against the principle of the dollar. There must be a law that prosecutes and punishes anyone selling and imposing his rates in dollars. We are against the principle of the "dollarization" of the Lebanese economy, because this will link it to foreign currency and will lead to the control of foreign policy and destroy the Lebanese economy. Therefore this is very dangerous, and at that point we will have abandoned our true identity. I am amazed. Why hasn't the Chamber of Deputies moved? Although there are clear laws in this regard, however, not even the courts have moved to take action.

There must not be contracts in foreign currency; prices must not be imposed on the basis of foreign currency; all contracts, prices, and dealings among people must be in Lebanese currency; and there must be declared rates. This is the function of the Ministry of Economy, which we have talked about at length.

If the government has not been able to perform its most minor duties in overseeing the price of a bottle of soda or the prices of bread, rice, and flour, what can it do?

[Question] You assuredly have information on the subject of the dollar and the dollar mafia. Why don't you announce it?

[Answer] What can I say? It's like the fox guarding the chicken coop!

[Question] You are a Maronite, and your popularity is strong. Are you running as a candidate for the presidency?

[Answer] My position in the General Labor Union allows me to fulfill all my aspirations, which is that I represent all the people. On the basis of this premise, I believe that it is enough that I perform my duty through the union and not be diverted by these issues by which people entertain themselves.

11887

SAUDI ARABIA

Progress in Development Noted by Planning
Undersecretary
44040006a Riyadh AL-RIYAD in Arabic 29 Sep 87 p 1

[Excerpt] Jeddah (SPA)—Planning Undersecretary Husayn Sijini said that development planning—which the kingdom's government has been pursuing with the

guidance of the custodian of the two holy places, King Fahd ibn-'Abd-al-'Aziz, and his loyal crown prince, his royal highness Amir 'Abdallah ibn-'Abd-al-'Aziz—has achieved great success and has become an exemplary achievement in the various world forums and the specialized international scientific institutions.

In a statement to SPA, Sijini said that the achievements accomplished constitute a link in the series of developments in the various regions of the kingdom.

Sijini stressed that the guidance provided by the custodian of the two holy places and his loyal crown prince underlines their resolve to develop the Saudi citizen, realize his ambitions, satisfy his needs, and improve his standard of living. All this, he added, was and is being achieved while adhering to the principles of the magnanimous Islamic Shari'ah and while preserving Islamic values.

The planning undersecretary pointed out the distinguished position the kingdom enjoys not only locally but also internationally in many important and vital fields. This was attested to by the International Bank for Reconstruction and Development in its yearbook *Development in 1987*, which cited facts about development in the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia compared to all the nations of the World, including the superpowers which have been ahead of the kingdom in terms of development by scores of years.

Summing up what the book said about development in the kingdom, Husayn Sijini said that the agricultural sector in the kingdom ranks second among all the nations of the world, in that it has achieved a growth rate of 8 percent during the period 1400-1405 A.H., thereby overtaking many of the countries with highly advanced technology.

Sijini said that the kingdom's position is second among the nations of the world in terms of the declining mortality rate. The number of deaths has dropped from 2 percent of the population in 1385 A.H. to only .8 percent in 1405 A.H., representing a 60 percent decline. Sijini attributed this to social prosperity and the development of the health sector in both its curative and preventive sectors.

The World Bank yearbook also pointed out that the kingdom leads most of the developing nations in terms of the declining child mortality rate.

13305

SYRIA

Obstacles Facing Upper Yarmuk Project Described
4404003a Damascus AL-THAWRAH in Arabic
10 Jun 87 p 6

[Article by Ahmad Zayid: "Upper Yarmuk Project: Will the Existing Difficulties Be Overcome?"]

[Text] The Upper Yarmuk project is considered one of the vitally important agricultural projects in Dar'a Province, because this project aims at irrigation and storage and at reclamation of an area of land measuring 100,000 dunams in Dar'a, 'Uthman, Tafas, al-Yadudah, Da'il, and Ibt'a'. Work began on the project in 1985 by drawing water from Lake al-Muzayrib in order to construct a 900 liter/second pumping station at it, make use of the water raised from the Tall Shihab and al-Ash'ari pumping stations, and construct a collecting dam at the al-Kutaybah site to irrigate high-altitude areas in Ibt'a' and Da'il. Cost of the project amounts to 120 million Syrian pounds.

On the project site, we met Engineer 'Imad Khuri, director of irrigation installations, southern region branch. He told us that the Upper Yarmuk project is a winter irrigation project. According to the technical specifications of the project and based on study reports, the pumping stations will work for 208 days a year, divided into the following periods:

1. First phase: a period of stand-by and regular irrigation that begins from 8 September each year and ends on 7 December—a period of 73 days.

2. Second phase: a period of accumulating water behind al-Kutaybah Dam. It begins from 8 December each year and ends on 8 February—a period of 63 days.

3. Third phase: a period of spring irrigation that begins from 9 February each year and ends on 21 April—a period of 72 days. After this period, the pumps stop working, while the Tall Shihab and al-Ash'ari pumping stations continue raising water. The first pumping station may participate when needed. This period continues from 21 April each year and ends on 25 September each year for irrigating the lands of the al-Muzayrib area.

About the length of the waterways, Engineer 'Imad Khuri said:

1. The principal open waterways in this project have a length of 53 km.

2. The secondary open waterways have a length of 25 km.

3. Field waterways are 6 km and open distribution waterways 30 km—i.e., a total length of 114 km for these waterways.

4. Secondary pipe waterways have a length of 53 km, pipe distribution waterways a length of 74 km, and field ones a length of 15 km.

This is in addition to the construction of agricultural roads beside the principal waterways and of field roads.

We also met with Engineer 'Abd-al-Mawjud al-Khatib, who spoke to us about the stages of implementation: "We have completed the construction of the three required pumping centers according to the time schedules registered with the Ministry of Irrigation, in addition to earth fills. This amounts to 75 percent of the scheduled work. We have also implemented 50 percent of the work of lining the open watercourses with concrete. We have implemented installation of about 52 km of (asbestos and cement water mains, equivalent to 40 percent. Implementation has been completed for the principal siphon on the drawing canal, and of the 300 meter suspended canal."

Concerning the difficulties, Engineer 'Abd-al-Mawjud said: "The operations we are implementing in this project are ones that require the special parts needed for asbestos water mains and the 9 km of steel pumping lines needed for the pumping stations. Our company has contracted to import them. Another difficulty relates to implementation of al-Kutaybah Dam, as we are still awaiting the final technical opinion from the Ministry of Irrigation. There is also a lack of specialized manpower, so that [the ministry] cannot guarantee the needed cadre of workers to implement the 1987 plans."

The branch director also spoke about the difficulties, saying: "Without doubt, our construction vehicles on this project are operating an extended work shift amounting to 12 hours a day. They require the necessary spare parts, but we generally find difficulty in obtaining them."

"We observed from our tour that there is a shortage of specialized work force, so that the company's general administration has transferred 60 specialized workers from a branch in al-Raqqa Province to Dar'a to fill a partial gap of the general labor force deficit, so that work can continue on this project, even though this step does not give the required yield. In addition, these workers are an expense to the government in terms of compensating for transportation and guaranteeing housing to the General Company for Irrigation Installations. If [the company] obtained approval from the appropriate authorities to hire seasonal workers for a short time in order to complete this vitally important project, it would be better than transporting any personnel from another province."

12937

Study Shows Improved Conditions for Rural Women

44040002 Damascus AL-TIAWRAH in Arabic
8 Aug 87 p 5

[Article: "The Situation of Rural Women and the Progress Which Has Been Achieved"]

[Text] The General Women's Federation recently prepared a study on the situation of rural women and the progress which has been achieved under the blessed reform movement led by Struggling Comrade Hafiz al-Asad.

The study explained the importance of female participation in all areas of economic, political, social and cultural life, and said that the role of the Syrian woman has grown in accordance with the social and economic development plans and the general state policy, which started from certain basic standards, the most important being liberating women socially and intellectually and providing them with educational and employment opportunities, as well as providing training and qualification in keeping with their nature and capabilities. A quick review of the fourth and fifth 5-year development plans (1976-1985) clearly shows that both plans stressed the need to attract women to productive work and to make it possible for them to acquire the expertise and skills essential to their work, in addition to raising their educational level, diversifying their skills, and other basic strategic principles called for by the above-mentioned plans. Such goals derive from the theoretical principles of the Arab Socialist Ba'ath Party, which has concerned itself with liberating rural women and providing the objective circumstances which will free them from backward customs and traditions.

Rural women have received particular attention recently, as part of a general trend towards developing the rural sector and rural industries, improving the standard of living in rural society, and providing the services which are needed to bond the rural citizen to his land and his work, so that he can play his true role in building our advanced socialist society.

Statistics indicate that about half the country's women live in rural areas; i.e., 51.5 percent of the country's women live in the countryside as opposed to 49.5 percent in urban areas. In our society, the countrywomen have suffered greatly, and have been deprived of various opportunities which in the past had been available to the men but which the women have not yet acquired. Therefore, continual efforts must be made to develop this large, important sector and give it priority. Developing rural women means developing rural society as a whole, and bringing it to a more advanced stage. By development, we mean changing the women's mentality and their view of their role in society, and expanding their participation in all political, social and economic areas. Women's work must not be limited to raising children and managing the home, but must go beyond that to public work, including political work.

Here we shall present a general overview of the situation of rural women and the changes which have taken place in the past decade, using population statistics from the 1976 census and the 1984 population sample.

The Social Situation

Rural women have been able to overcome many of the customs and traditions which had governed their conduct and had restricted their will and freedom. This has been achieved through the reform movement and its revolutionary concepts concerning developing society.

particularly liberating women, as well as through the support provided by President Hafiz al-Asad, who provided women with many advantages which enabled them to improve themselves and change their way of life.

The rural women's situation has many special characteristics which distinguish them from urban women. For example, we might mention the rural women's fertility; they tend to have a great many children during their married life. A study of the country's fertility conducted in 1978 shows that on the whole rural women have 8.6 births per person as opposed to 6 births per person for urban women. This means that on the average, the countrywoman has nine children during her married life, although this figure may drop because of the relatively higher rural rate of infant and child mortality. According to the results of the 1979 demographic survey, the infant mortality rate in rural areas is 68 per thousand, as opposed to 43 per thousand in the cities. It is worth mentioning that the child mortality rate has dropped noticeably from its 1970 figure of more than 115 per thousand, because of advancements in rural health, the most important being increased awareness among rural women, the provision of health services, the spread of infants' and mothers' care centers in various parts of the countryside, the availability of free vaccinations and family medical care in the rural areas, and other methods which helped improve the health standard.

It can be seen from the census figures for 1970 and 1981 that the average size of the rural family has grown. We find that the average family size increased from 5.9 persons in 1970 to 6.06 persons in 1980. The size of the family is influenced by many social and economic factors which there is no room to go into right now.

The Educational Situation

Rural women have made noticeable progress in education, since they have been able to obtain higher levels of schooling and obtain master's degrees and doctorates, as well as bachelor degrees. Even though this percentage is still small, it is a good indication of the importance the rural women accord to education. More than 20 percent of rural women over 10 years of age have elementary school certificates. We hope that this percentage will increase with time, but we all know that any change takes time, since it is not an easy matter.

There has been a noticeable drop in illiteracy, by virtue of the efforts made by the state and the popular organizations, particularly the General Women's Federation. Among the country's women as a whole, illiteracy dropped from 85 percent in 1976 to 45 percent in 1984, and for rural women the rate dropped from 73 percent to 60 percent for the same two years. It can be seen from statistics that the urban woman's educational situation is much better, since the illiteracy rate for urban women ten years of age or older was 34 percent in 1984. The problem of illiteracy is one of the most complicated and

difficult problems facing the developing countries. We hope that this problem can be eliminated in the near future, which would mean a qualitative transformation of our society.

The Economic Situation

Work is a social necessity and a national duty, required of everyone capable of working and giving of himself. In our society there is no room for the idle and the lazy. The rural women of our society are true givers, giving of themselves without limit and working silently and uncomplainingly. They divide their time among housework, agricultural work, and caring for their families. In this sense, all the countrywomen are sharing in the workload. However, what we want to discuss now is paid economic work. Statistics show that rural women account for a larger part of the labor force than their urban counterparts. The figures show that the percentage of working rural women in the total labor force rose from 9.3 percent in 1976 to 18.2 percent in 1984. In other terms, the number of employed rural women rose from 8,895 in 1976 to 18,723 in 1984.

Here we can draw the following conclusions:

1. Only a small percentage, 1.5 percent, of rural women are unemployed, whether they had been working previously or had never worked before.
2. A high percentage, 61.8 percent, of rural women are exclusively occupied with managing household affairs, as opposed to 60.4 percent of urban women.
3. A small percentage, 7 percent, of women do not want to work, and this figure is evenly divided between urban and rural women.
4. About 1.5 percent of rural women are unable to work because of illness, handicap, or other reasons.

As for the occupational distribution, the results of the 1984 population sampling indicate that 91.2 percent of employed rural women are working in agriculture, 6.7 percent are working in industry and production, and 1.3 percent are working in administrative, secretarial and technical positions. Only 0.8 percent of rural women work in sales and services. This means that the primary field of work for rural women is agriculture, either for wages or for the family, without pay.

The Political and Organizational Situation

Countrywomen have entered all political and organizational areas. Many rural women have attained the highest legislative authority, the People's Assembly, and the percentage of rural women's representation on local administrative councils has increased. As for the popular organizations, rural women are present in large numbers in all of them without exception, as in the case of the

Revolutionary Youth Organization, the Student Federation, the Labor Union Federation, and other vanguard organizations in our society. The Women's Federation has the most women members; in 1984 it had 140,000 women members, about half of whom were from the countryside.

The Women's Federation enjoys significant support from the state and the Arab Socialist Ba'ath Party. This federation is subordinate to the National Popular Organizations Bureau, and is administratively linked to the Ministry of Social Affairs. Thus the federation has been able to carry out its many missions, the chief ones being fighting female illiteracy and conducting professional training classes aimed at teaching rural women professions which will allow them to enter the work field. The federation is also increasing the rural women's intellectual and political awareness through organizational classes which the federation holds regularly, in order to make the rural women aware of the political events facing our country and to reveal to them the foreign, imperialist and Zionist plots aimed at our steadfast country.

There is no room here to go into all the functions of the Women's Federation, but we can say that the federation has helped advance and develop the countrywomen. In closing, we want to say that the rural women's situation is not yet what it should be or what we hope for it. Our country will continue working to support the countrywomen in their constant struggle against backwardness, ignorance, customs and traditions, so that they may attain complete freedom from economic and intellectual subservience.

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TUNISIA

Foreign Minister Mabrouk Discusses Foreign Relations

45040003 Tunis AL-SABAH in Arabic 20 Sep 87 pp 1, 2

[AL-SABAH Interview with Foreign Minister Hedi Mabrouk: 'We Are Striving To Intensify Pressures on Iran and Call on the Great Powers to Compel Iran To Obey'; date, place, and occasion not given]

[Text] Tunisian diplomacy is experiencing great activity during this period and is with great profit and ability confronting many political problems and questions. This ability becomes evident both through the men who watch over this diplomacy and through the geographical and political situation in which Tunisia is located.

In this comprehensive interview that Foreign Minister Hedi Mabrouk gave to AL-SABAH, the most important political focuses of our diplomacy emerge, together with its most important goals and the highlights of its successes in the various aspects of Tunisian diplomatic activity.

The verbatim text of this interview follows:

[Question] What are the pillars of Tunisian foreign policy during this period?

There is much talk about a possible restoration of Tunisian-Libyan diplomatic relations: Is some new factor causing this belief, and has there been a settlement of pending problems?

[Answer] The pillars of Tunisian foreign policy are firm and rest on the genius of the Bourguibian view of the international field and our country's relation to it, insofar as we are a free, independent, and sovereign country, as our constitution specifies, and insofar as we are the extension of a deep-rooted history and of a culture that has enriched the achievements of humanity.

By "pillars," as I understand it while you are listening to me, you mean "focuses of interest"—is that correct?

[Question] That is what I meant.

[Answer] Then there is no difficulty in mentioning the most important of them:

Our first interest is to support our international position as is consistent with our president's brilliant reputation and the international assets recognized far and wide that we have thereby acquired. Perhaps one of our greatest interests in this field is to work by appropriate means to confront numerous challenges, some springing from regional and international conditions, others springing from the development our society is undergoing in scale of values, pattern of life, and the relation between possibilities and expectations. However, as I recall having stated to you on a previous occasion, this does not distract us from assuming our role within the North African, Arab, and international community, particularly since there are major issues deserving attention in these various areas.

Removing Tension With Libya

[Question] What about Libya and Tunisia?

[Answer] Certainly, Tunisia sincerely desires to cleanse its relations with Libya from the results and causes of the 1985 crisis. As part of this desire, Tunisia wishes to remove the causes of the almost chronic state of crisis.

We are now trying to convert the good intentions we have heard from Libyan officials into tangible realities. Other steps will then be initiated to restore conditions between us to normal, and the final manifestation of this will be normalization of relations between the two countries. At that point, Tunisian diplomacy will assume its delegated role in pursuing various subjects with the Libyan side. But today you notice that we are still

treating problems of a predominantly social character; for that reason, my colleague Hedi Baccouche, the minister of social affairs, is personally handling the subject with the Libyans.

The Right Key

[Question] Tunisia is linked with Algeria and Mauritania in a charter of concord and brotherhood. Are there any possibilities of Libya's joining? Was an August summit meeting scheduled to be held in Tunis between Tunisia, Algeria, and Libya?

[Answer] How do you ask me this question, knowing as you do that this agreement is an open one? The key to the door lies in the hands of anyone who wants to join. But it has to be really the right key. In this area, you doubtlessly remember that anyone desiring to enter the agreement must fulfil the condition of adherence to its content. The spirit of this adherence is the mutual confidence between the members of the agreement. You ask me about a summit meeting that you say was scheduled to be held in Tunis in August. I would ask you in turn who scheduled this meeting? From this question of mine you can obtain the answer.

Firm Relations With Arab Brothers

[Question] It appears that Tunisia is headed toward establishing balanced relations with the various North African countries. Will that influence the special relationship with Algeria, which for years has been based on a rapprochement which some people have seen as being at Morocco's expense?

[Answer] The establishment of balanced relations with the various North African countries is one of the constants in President Bourguiba's foreign policy. This does not exclude, rather it strengthens the establishment of special relationships with this or that country. In this area, we do not build such special relationships on the foundation of blocs that ignore the realistic view of building a regional community, such as "Greater North Africa." Some circumstances give certain stages of relations possibly erroneous additional dimensions and meanings. Thus, this impression has developed among some people about whom you have spoken. Even when for bilateral reasons our relations with a particular country are bad, we do not work to build regional relations at its expense. How much more so when that concerns a country like our brother country, the Kingdom of Morocco?

[Question] It seems there is a cooling in Tunisian relations with Saudi Arabia and Kuwait, and aid from these countries has diminished and shrunk. Is this due to political considerations? Is it related to Mzali's being received in the two capitals? Or is it basically linked to the income decline in the two countries?

[Answer] I stress to you that what seems to be the case to you does not correspond to reality. Prime Minister Rachid Sfar was in Kuwait a short time ago, and there is no confusion about our stand beside this brother Arab state. The position that His Excellency President Habib Bourguiba announced in the wake of the Iranian-engineered incidents during the Pilgrimage is well-known, and was met with great appreciation by our brothers in Saudi Arabia. Our relations with these two brother countries are good, as they have always been. Your question gives me an opportunity to remove a confusion in evaluating relations between Tunisia and its wealthy brothers. You mention that assistance from these two countries to Tunisia has shrunk, and you think this phenomenon has been the result of a "cooling." Sir, Tunisia does not establish its relations with its brothers with the motive of seeking material assistance alone. If we applied the material standard in our relations, these relations with many countries would disappear. Please give this idea prominence when you publish my words. Be certain that we are satisfied with our relations with our two brother countries, in spite of our desire to improve cooperation with them, so that it reaches the level of the strong fraternal ties existing between us.

[Question] There are said to be possibilities for establishing a North African Cooperation Council modeled on the GCC. What is Tunisia's viewpoint, and what are her conditions for establishing such a cooperative agency?

[Answer] Tunisia supports regional alliances founded on common interests and based on sound principles. Tunisia gives its blessing to whatever channels of cooperation are available between the brother countries of North Africa.

Arab Solidarity

[Question] Tunisia usually does not see the need for holding emergency meetings of the council of the Arab League, but this time it has hastened to call for one. Is this connected to what is happening in the Gulf across from Kuwait and Saudi Arabia and to the recent explosions in Tunisia with which Iran is thought to be related in some way or another?

[Answer] There is no mechanical stand regarding accepting or rejecting a call for holding such meetings. Feeling such a meeting necessary, Tunisia has recently espoused the call for holding an emergency meeting of the Council of Foreign Ministers of Arab Nations, because the danger has reached a degree that calls for the Arabs to act resolutely and confront it effectively. When Tunisia called for the meeting, it did so only with a view toward solidarity with its brothers and the mutual assistance which is indeed one of our special characteristics. I can only marvel at your linking this principled stand to certain domestic trivialities.

[Question] What are the next steps toward ending the Iraq-Iran war, and what will be the role of Tunisia, which previously played an active role in getting the members of the Security Council to issue the cease-fire resolution?

[Answer] We are now striving to implement Security Council Resolution 598 (1987) calling for a cease-fire. Together with our brothers, we are striving to intensify pressures on the obstinate party, namely Iran. Our hope is that the superpowers will stand together behind the resolution they have adopted and take the appropriate steps to force the recalcitrant party to obey. As for Tunisia's role, I would ask you not to embarrass me with a request for an answer. We are part of a group working in coordination; everyone's aim is noble, and their efforts deserve thanks. Hopefully, they will be crowned with success.

Our Relations With France Are Well-Developed

[Question] Tunisian-French relations have always been well-developed, but they have been overcast by many shadows ever since Mohamed Mzali took up residence there. What were the results of the prime minister's efforts with French authorities on this matter?

[Answer] In this regard, you are like someone looking for a live coal among ashes; but I am not afraid for you, because you will find no live coals.

Our relations with France remain as they were: well-developed, on the basis I previously mentioned when I answered one of your questions a short time ago. What you erroneously thought to be a reason [for their being overcast] is ash without a spark.

[Question] After the signing of the supplementary agreement with the Common Market, observers expect that some of our exports, such as oils, will be subject to restrictions in coming years. We have means of counter-pressure, but isn't it preferable for us to try to set up a cohesive North African wall against these pressures?

[Answer] We have not remained with our hands tied in the face of the situation that has grown out of well-known developments in the European Common Market. We are continually striving to alleviate the resultant negative impacts on our exports. One of the axes of our efforts is the North African axis. However, in this matter the options are to a great extent limited, and implementation does not support the practicality of many theoretical solutions. I ask you to trust that our diplomacy is carrying out its role in this regard in the best way.

Joint North African Action

[Question] ... said that a joint North African group will be asked in the near future to think about how to build North African unity, and that it will be charged with

making the intellectual and economic preparation necessary for building it. To what extent is this true? What is the nature of the composition of this agency, and will Morocco be represented in it?

[Answer] The group of which you speak has always existed. Sometimes it has been the three North African political parties; at other times it has been the governments or specialized agencies within them. The idea of commissioning an exploratory agency, such as you mentioned, and initially entrusting it with responsibility for preparing concepts for North African economic integration is sometimes proposed. If it is destined to see the light, it will either be comprehensive or it will not exist at all.

[Question] To date, two fundamental problems appear to be blocking joint North African political action: the Western Sahara problem, and the nature of relations between certain organizations in the region. What are the possibilities for overcoming these two obstacles? In light of the latest developments, what are the prospects for solving the Sahara problem?

[Answer] I agree with you in defining these two problems as obstacles to joint North African action. These two problems can be overcome only if everyone is firmly convinced that the strength of any one of us does not necessarily call for weakening the others, and that the cultural challenges facing us will crush us all and will indeed increase in strength, the weaker we become because of these two obstacles.

But a reading of the situation with full regard to time and place leaves the observer with some hope for salvation. Hopefully, it will not be very distant.

[Question] During your meeting with the press a while ago at al-Maghribiyah Publishing House in Carthage, you said that Tunisia had arrived at a formula for a way of obtaining the reparations mandated for it by the Security Council in the wake of the Israeli attack on our country on 1 October 1985. What is this formula, and is Tunisia on the way to obtaining these reparations?

[Answer] In the school of Bourguiba, we have learned to confront any difficulties with constancy and patience and with deep and sincere analysis. If our country is passing through certain tensions, world public opinion has not been surprised by this; neither is it, despite many empty and misleading claims, much influenced by what adversaries say about us.

We have active diplomatic missions and a wide network of relations. Furthermore, we have friendships and large assets in many international circles. Above and beyond all this, we have the brilliant reputation of the great Bourguiba. The world has become well-acquainted with him; it has learned the scope of his vision and the soundness of his evaluation, and of his wagers with history, which he has always won. [Box, p 2]

Arab League Council—Mabrouk: Positive Results of Arab Moves

Foreign Minister Hedi Mabrouk stressed Tunisia's duty to call for the holding of an emergency meeting of Arab state foreign ministers to confront conditions in the Gulf region resulting from the Iraq-Iran war, the events in Mecca, and the threats aimed at the state of Kuwait.

In a statement given to TAP, Mr Hedi Mabrouk added that although the results of the previous emergency session were partial and inconclusive, it nevertheless enabled the Arab states to prepare a plan to sensitize all countries, especially those with permanent membership in the Security Council, to the danger of the situation in the Gulf region.

Mabrouk said, "The results of Arab moves toward the Security Council countries and the international community have been positive." He added: "We meet today to evaluate those results and to study the possibility of holding meetings in New York in connection with the meetings of the 42nd session of the UN General Assembly." At the conclusion of his statement, Mr Hedi Mabrouk anticipated that the meeting of the council of the League would be an occasion at which the Arab states agree to hold an Arab summit.

12937

Emigrant Workers' Contribution to Country's Economy Suggested

43190132a Tunis DIALOGUE in French
22 Jun 87 pp 14-16

[Interview with Naceur Gharbi, managing director of [OPETTE] [Office of Employment Promotion and of Tunisian Workers Abroad] by Heida Baraket]

[Text] The 21st Seminar on Tunisian Workers Abroad will open one month from now in Monastir. It is an annual forum and, this time, will define opportunities that could enable our colony abroad to contribute to the implementation of the goals of the 7th Plan. Special emphasis will also be given to the artistic and literary ambitions of this colony and to the full range of the young people's emigration-related problems. Concern about these problems is all the more justified as young people, according to the latest statistics, account for close to half the Tunisian work force settled in West European countries.

To get fuller information, we interviewed Naceur Gharbi, OPETTE managing director, who gave us an exclusive interview on the new data and restrictions that will dictate the topics to be debated during the next seminar. Consequently, this meeting will focus primarily on the emigrant, the exporting of goods and services, the teaching of Arabic, the condition of the emigrant woman, and the responsibility of emigrant parents toward the new generation.

[Question] What new items will be placed on the agenda of the 21st Seminar on Tunisian Workers Abroad? And, since topics are usually chosen on the basis of the economic outlook of the country, what new data or restrictions prompted the choice of topic for this year?

[Answer] If we chose to focus last year's seminar on the topic "Participation of Tunisian Workers Abroad in the National Economy," it is because the Tunisian colony abroad, as an integral part of the Tunisian economy, is aware enough of its role, mission, and community of interests—implied by its adherence to the Tunisian economy—to participate in development activities according to its means and specific characteristics.

This year, which is the first one of the 7th Plan, will enable us to study thoroughly and define as concretely as possible the ways and means, and even opportunities, through which our colony will express—moreover, has expressed many times—its wishes to participate in the implementation of the goals and challenges of the 7th Plan and even go beyond them.

The participation of our colony could therefore follow three broad courses. The first is participation in the investment sector through productive projects; the second is participation in savings according to very advantageous formulas well adapted to the needs of our workers and even to their rights to make an investment as profitable as it is capable of giving them security. This brings us to the third course, which is the one we emphasize, namely, exports.

As a matter of fact, our colony can be a channel for both indirect—by consuming Tunisian products and disseminating Tunisian customs of consumption—and, above all, direct exports, seeing that there are among our workers abroad some merchants and service enterprises willing and able to endorse the will of the government in the promotion of exports.

In that context, our research and inquiry will depend on the detail that causes difficulty because, in principle, the system is perfect. However, at the very moment our workers abroad want to express their solidarity with our national community, the latter will show evidence of its interest for their concerns. Hence the directive of the minister of social affairs emphasizes the "Second Generation" during this seminar.

[Question] Will this be the main topic of the 21st seminar?

[Answer] No, because numerous topics will be debated. Let us list, among others, the gains of our colony, questions of supervision, and working and residency conditions. In addition, this year a special and new emphasis will be given to artistic and literary creation as a form of expression because I believe that emigration is a very fruitful human experience that has not failed, and will not fail, to generate creativity.

[Question] With regard to emigration, we hear more about specific measures for organizing the final return than about measures affecting the colony in the host country, its working and residency conditions.

[Answer] Yet, officials of the host country hear more about our worries concerning the working and residency conditions of the Tunisian colony. As a matter of fact, the action of the government toward workers abroad encompasses all the aspects of emigration.

Concerning working and residency conditions abroad, we have set up, with the various employing countries, an arsenal of agreements pertaining to the work force and to social security. These countries are France, Germany, Belgium, the Netherlands, Austria, Italy, the Arab Emirates, Qatar, Oman, Iraq, Algeria, and Morocco (a settlement agreement for the latter).

These agreements secure for our workers equality of treatment in the matter of wages, working conditions, and social security. Joint commissions, with members from Tunisia and these countries, meet regularly to evaluate the situation and consolidate our workers' gains. On that subject, I can confirm that the emigration dossier, and the security and dignity of our colony, are at the top of the issues debated between high state officials, headed by President Bourguiba, and their counterparts from the various host countries. There is also the action of our embassies and consulates.

We have two deputies in the National Assembly entrusted with keeping the interests and concerns of our colony alive in the Chamber of Deputies constitutional arena. Also, 40 members, representing the Tunisian colony in various host countries, attended the latest party congress. As for the associations, they benefit from the moral and material support of the government. In that context, social attaches do an important job since they help our workers with the paperwork they must submit to the employing countries, and they implement, on their behalf, individual or group social programs.

[Question] You spoke of a second generation when, in reality, we now have a third one. Despite all that has been done and knowing that the language issue—as the main topic—has been raised, what is being done for these emigrants' children, whether in the native or host country, toward good social or cultural reintegration?

[Answer] You are right to disagree with the words "Second Generation." The exact phrase should be "Emigration-born youths." In any case, beyond the quarrel over words and phrases, such as "young migrants, zero generation, young emigrants, and second-generation migrants," which blur the issue, the reality is that the young Tunisians who were accounted for in the various West European countries (France, FRG, Belgium, and the Netherlands) represent close to half of the Tunisian work force settled in these countries.

As a matter of fact, youths less than 14 years old account for 34 percent of the entire Tunisian colony in these countries, and young people less than 25 years old account for 48.6 percent of that same colony.

Thus, close to one Tunisian out of three living in France, Belgium, and the FRG is less than 14 years old, and almost one out of two Tunisians living in France and Belgium is less than 25 years old. This data is such that the host countries need a strong and responsible approach for these young people who are encountering difficulties, especially in school and professional training.

The need to prevent the learning of Arabic from becoming an additional difficulty must also be taken into consideration. To that end, two methods for teaching Arabic are being used.

First, integrated teaching of Arabic during regular hours in the students' school is carried on by Tunisian teachers sent and paid by the Tunisian government. Then additional classes scheduled outside school hours, either during days off or in addition to regular courses, are taught by teachers recruited locally among the Tunisian colony abroad.

According to statistics reporting developments in the teaching of Arabic in Europe from 1974 to 1986, it has been established that, for the 1985-1986 school year, there were 107 teachers for 9,557 students in 455 centers. However, I would like to take this opportunity to point out that the school is not solely responsible for the teaching of the native language. In the first place, it is a cultural venture involving the parents, the press, and the various means of information, programs, and cultural events organized for or by the colony.

I can assure you that, in this matter, the field is open to the initiative and participation of the various public or private parties intervening in this sector and that we perceive no opposition on the part of the authorities in the host countries.

[Question] The Tunisian population in Arab countries has increased throughout the years. Since it is not encountering problems with being uprooted or lack of familiarity with local customs, one wonders if it has any specific difficulties?

[Answer] No, it has no specific difficulties. The problem with our settlements in Arab countries is not one of residency but of movement. That is to say, the number of workers exchanged remains insufficient and within the receiving capability of these countries and the availability of our labor market.

[Question] Some people believe that the emigrant's spouse remains the eternally forgotten one. Is this true?

[Answer] Forgotten by whom? Her husband? Certainly not, since our colony stands out among others for the reliability with which workers return during vacation time and send money to their families. This does not prevent our social services from uncovering some difficulties, which they try to iron out.

If you are thinking about Tunisian women living abroad, you should know that they are entering the labor market in increasing numbers, which is a tremendous means of emancipation, and that they are playing an increasingly determinant role in the education of children and, hence, in the care of the "family."

Not too long ago, the minister of social affairs asked the social attaches to initiate programs for these women and to ensure social bureaus opened in permanence for them. However, beyond this, the whole social care program is aimed indiscriminately at the family unit.

[Question] Among the recommendations made during the previous meeting of the seminar, the possibility to export the services of Tunisian economic enterprises was raised. Was the suggestion followed up?

[Answer] This idea was very successful inasmuch as a follow-up commission, regrouping the various public and private intervening parties, submitted a report.

In preparation for the 7th Plan, there was a meeting to discuss the export of goods and services. Administrative and regulatory measures are being taken or will gradually be incorporated into our regulations.

This will be done to ensure the same advantages to exporters of both services and goods.

[Question] Emigrants-Office relations. In what terms can they be expressed?

[Answer] In terms of growing confidence and even of a certain complicity, since the Office tries to be increasingly more concrete in its intervention on their behalf. At the social action level, it keeps up with the real concerns of the colony and, in a concrete and sustained manner, follows the workers' plans for economic reintegration.

It also takes care of their paperwork with the consenting, or even financial, institutions.

[Question] For a long time, the emigrant worker ignored his rights and duties. The situation has changed. Do you feel that today's emigrant is fully aware of it?

[Answer] Aware, yes. But this awareness can take more meaningful forms through greater participation in the investment and savings sectors as well as at the level of his children's school administration in order to give him better opportunities for a successful reintegration of his own choosing in Tunisia or in the employment countries.

The economic exhibition that we will organize on the occasion of the 21st seminar will show that success comes only to those who undertake something.

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BANGLADESH

Ghorasal Power Station Agreement With USSR
03130748 Dhaka Domestic Service in English
0110 GMT 13 Oct 87

[Excerpt] Bangladesh and the Soviet Union have initiated an agreement for the construction of the sixth unit of the Ghorasal power station. The agreement was initiated in (Dhaka) yesterday after the final round of talks between the delegations of the two countries.

Memorandum of Understanding With Iran Hailed
03290438 Islamabad Domestic Service in Urdu
0200 GMT 29 Oct 87

[Text] The Iranian finance minister, Mohammad Javad Iravani, has said that positive results of total understanding have been achieved at the Pakistan-Iran joint ministerial commission meetings. He said this after signing a memorandum of understanding between Pakistan and Iran after the commission's meetings in Islamabad. He described the memorandum of understanding as a good beginning toward promoting relations between the two countries. He said that he had fruitful and constructive talks with President Mohammad Ziaul Haq and Prime Minister Mohammad Khan Junejo.

The federal finance minister, Mohammad Yasin Khan Watto, has said on this occasion that the memorandum of understanding will be one more step toward further strengthening relations between Pakistan and Iran. He expressed the hope that the trade relations and mutual cooperation will improve further in the years to come.

Export Income Increases
03211315 Dhaka Domestic Service in English
0110 GMT 21 Oct 87

[Text] The country's export earnings during the last fiscal year stood at 3,326 crore taka. This shows an increase of 35 percent over the earnings of the previous year. In terms of foreign currency, the export earnings for the last fiscal year were \$106.10 crore, an increase of 30 percent. Out of the total export earnings, over 1,300 crore taka or 40 percent came from the traditional items, while the nontraditional items contributed over 1,900 crore taka or 60 percent. Nontraditional items, including garments, leather, frozen foods, vegetables, and newsprint contributed significantly to the exports earnings during last fiscal year.

Merger Forms New 'JuktaFront' Political Party
03281456 Dhaka THE BANGLADESH OBSERVER
in English 25 Oct 87 p 8

[Excerpt] A new political party styled as "JuktaFront" was floated on Saturday following the merger of four political parties with the aim of establishing a society

based on the ideals of Sher-e-Bangla A.K. Fazlul Huq, Husein Shaheed Suhrawardy and Moulana Abdul Hamid Khan Bhasanni, reports BSS. Addressing a Press conference at the national Press Club in Dhaka, Chairman of the Presidium of the newly-floated party Mr. Abu Naser Khan Bhasani said the party stood on consolidating the "country's independence and sovereignty, democracy, economic freedom and upholding of Islamic ideals with freedom to all other religions.

IRAN

Khomeyni Reportedly Listens to Voice of Israel
46040671a London AL-DUSTUR in Arabic
28 Sep 87 p 3

[Text] The Israeli newspaper MA'ARIV published an investigative report concerning the Voice of Israel broadcast in Persian, prepared by Shefi Gabay, editor of Arab affairs for the newspaper. The report includes an interview with Menashe Amir, director of broadcasting, who said that millions of Iranians listen to the Voice of Israel program in Persian daily, including the Ayatollah and officials in government circles, who receive a comprehensive report every day about all the news and analysis which the broadcast disseminates.

Menashe Amir confirms that Khomeyni considers himself one of the most enthusiastic listeners to the Voice of Israel Persian broadcast, and that he depends on its news and analysis for his special sessions with his confidants. The report says that during some of the closed sessions which Khomeyni held with a number of Ayats (Ayatollahs), he attacked them fiercely because of the current disagreement among them over the succession.

Gabay mentions that a Western diplomat recently visited Iran, and met with leading figures in the Iranian government. When he attempted to inquire about what was happening inside Iran, he was surprised by the following response: "Why do you people all ask me this question? You can obtain other details by regularly listening to the Voice of Israel broadcasts in Persian. The Jews know everything."

What the Iranian official with whom the Western diplomat spoke did not say is that the Jews know everything about Iran because the Ayats (Ayatollahs) coordinate and plan with them.

New Telephone Network Inaugurated in Sanandaj
46040001b Tehran KAYHAN AL-ARABI in Arabic
28 Sep 87 p 1

[Text] On the occasion of the sixth day of Holy Defense Week, yesterday, Sunday afternoon, an international telephone communications network in Sanandaj was inaugurated in the presence of the deputy minister of post, telegraph, and telephone.

IRNA said that this project, which was carried out by engineers contracted to the ministry, cost 30 million rials.

New Dams Under Construction in Khorasan
46040001c Tehran KAYHAN AL-'ARABI in Arabic
28 Sep 87 p 2

The executive director of the water supply company in the province of Khorasan added that, as a result of using these dams, there will be approximately 400 million square meters of water added to the volume of water in the province.

[Text] The water supply company in the province of Khorasan will begin constructing eight water storage dams in eight locations in this province with an allocation of 30 billion rials.

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